

ART-LOVERS
John Armstrong Walker

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Paintings from the novel Art-lovers on our website

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

(John 4 :24)

To the memory of Gordon Lyle

Henry Bowers wasn't sure where he was going. He knew fine well that the flat he had just bought, with his redundancy money, lay at the far end of Sauchiehall Street. No, the uncertainty for the young artist lay in life itself, and with every step he took negative questions born from negative images seemed to creep into his mind: "Henry are you sure you can survive as an artist in this artless city?" Will people buy your paintings? Will the stars and the moon bow down to you?"

Henry, at that moment, looked up from the busy street at the blue spring morning sky above him and, somehow as if from a new world, life and all its wonder suddenly filled the young man with excitement. Thankfully, as the young artist gazed at the modern world around him, hope and joy filled his heart once more.

Just then an old man of about seventy - three times Henry's age - came towards the young artist on the busy street. The ordinary everyday appearance of the man, coupled with the bright sunlight on his face, made the young artist reflect, "Even though I have never seen him before, I know that he must have had to go through life and face up to the same situations as everyone else, for is life not the same for everyone: we live and we die."

As the old man moved slowly towards his destination, the young man he had just passed declared, "Yes, I will be an artist in this artless city - that's the job for me."

A little further up, past what has become known as the Rennie Mackintosh tea room, Henry lost himself once again in a world of dreams and fancies. In fact, it wasn't until a sexy young office lady, dressed in a dark two-piece suit, walked by him on Sauchiehall Street, that he fell back into a modern world of shops, streets, and signs.

Henry had noticed her about an hour ago in a bookshop in the centre of town. The young lady may have stood close to the young artist then, but for some reason he felt she had hid herself from him. She had even, he remembered, covered the title of the book that she was going to buy with her hand. This time, however, his dark-brown eyes fixed on her light-blue ones and, for some reason just then in time and space, two people passing each other by in life, on a busy metropolitan street, inhabited each other's world. The young artist sensed that although, in a magical wonderful second, everything seemed to be said about each other, the subject and object would be the only thing remembered.

Halfway along the alley of the Willows, another strange thought crossed Henry's mind. Just when the young artist looked up at the flat he had bought, directly opposite the cinema, he thought to himself, "Why in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-one young men are being offered redundancy money is beyond me - but there it is. There stands the sandstone flat that I have just acquired for seventeen thousand, three hundred and sixty-five pounds. And this is where I am going to work from. Yes, this is the place where I am going to produce the greatest art the world has ever seen."

Henry knew his friend Sandy would be waiting for him. He had left him there in the flat about an hour ago, in front of the telly. When he reached the second landing the young artist opened the door on the right-hand side of the stairs with a long thin key and, as soon as he got inside, he shouted to his friend, "Has anyone phoned!"

Sandy, who loved the morning more than any other time of the day, came through from the front room looking quite relaxed. In his usual way, he spoke in a deep easygoing voice to the young artist, “Oh, there you are, Henry, I thought you had runaway to Tahiti to follow in the footsteps of Paul Gauguin.”

The echo of the polite words in his own mind must have made a comic impression on him; for Sandy, who had been educated at a private school, screamed with laughter. Then he suddenly burst into life and danced around the room.

Henry from the hallway looked left into the living room, he heard the voice of an actress on the TV say: ‘Don’t leave me!’ then he looked right into the kitchen, that he had made into an artist’s studio, and there he heard the voice of someone on the radio say: ‘A German economist said yesterday that U.S. interest rates could plunge the world into economic disaster,’ and after a pause, he heard the same deep authoritative voice add something about a people’s march for jobs, a space shuttle planning to lift off, and something about a Royal wedding soon. For some reason the last statement made the young artist think about who he would like to marry, and his mind seemed to drift around a romantic universe for a time, as if searching for the right person.

Inside the kitchen-come-studio, Henry gazed out of the only window, situated at the back of the flat. He stared at the red sandstone office block, directly opposite him, as if looking into another world. When his gaze withdrew he followed the glorious morning sunlight back along the black and white tiled kitchen floor. Henry for some silly reason, at that moment, tried to figure out why the sun came from a source beyond human understanding. The young artist smiled when he thought to himself: “Through towns, country places, and city flats, every morning comes the glorious light and, as I watch it fall here and there, I know that the Good Lord has given us another day; rejoice for beauty and reason are revealed once more.”

Sandy, full of fun, standing beside him, laughed at the young artist as he stared at the kitchen floor. Then after a cough, he told him in a deep voice, “Oh, the Job Centre telephoned, Henry,” and

after a long pause, and a quick look at the young artist's face, Sandy added, "they told me to tell you that there are no current vacancies for artists at the moment. However, they will keep your name on file."

Both men laughed, and as Henry placed some brushes and paints, that he had bought that morning from Millers Art shop, just off Queen Street, on top of the kitchen table next to all his other working materials, he sighed. Then the young artist quoted one of his famous art axioms to his friend: "Art and Illusion - that's what life is all about."

Sandy screamed another wild laugh and, as he followed the young artist around the kitchen, the handsome man looked here and there as if inspecting the place. Henry's friend touched all the plants by the window, then asked their names. After this he looked at a magazine titled *The Face* that was lying on a chair by the door, clicked his tongue twice, said he knew the model, then shrieked again.

Presently, Sandy walked out of the kitchen-come-studio, but came straight back in again, and started washing cups and plates that had been stacked high in the kitchen sink for the past two days. Henry Bowers understood Sandy's eccentricities and let him be. It was at times like this that the young artist understood he mustn't say anything: for he knew more words would lead to more wonder thoughts, and more wonder thoughts would make his friend even more eccentric.

So far, in his new career as a working artist, Henry Bowers had painted fifty or sixty paintings. He thought about twenty of them were good enough for an exhibition. Standing looking at some of the paintings that were lying up against the wall in the kitchen-come-studio, Henry thought up a title for his first art show: "Fashion Squares," then he asked his friend if he liked the concept, "How does that sound, Squirrel?"

Sandy loved his nickname that had been given to him at school, and as he placed a colourful dish towel, that had a picture of an Indian woman dressed in an orange sari, surrounded by yellow and green leaves, onto the rail by the sink, he looked over at

one or two of the paintings that were lying up against the wall. The male model clicked his tongue twice, concentrated hard, then pulled at the sleeve of his Italian suit jacket. Presently, he said in a deep sensuous tone, “Yes, that sounds all right, Henry,” then he moved over and stood near the artist and stared at him.

No one knew what Sandy Squirrel did for a living. He just seemed to turn up everywhere and say the most outrageous things, like: “Oh, did you hear, darling, I’m modelling for the Warehouse Fashion Store these days,” and scream.

When Sandy Squirrel screamed, he usually doubled up with laughter and held onto the person nearest to him. The male model, seeing Henry preoccupied, tried to keep the young artist’s spirits up. In his deep impressive voice, he suggested, “Right, Henry, come on let’s go out this afternoon and have lunch. Let’s go to the Rogano restaurant.” And after a pause, the male model, as if to influence the decision, danced around the kitchen table, and joked in a masculine tone, “Then I will be able to say to you, don’t bite the hand that feeds you, Mr Henry Bowers,” and once more he screamed with laughter.

As the young artist thought about the offer, Sandy added, “You’d better hurry up and make your mind up, or you know who will turn up.”

Henry didn’t seem to mind about, ‘You know who.’ The young artist lifted up a smoke coloured tumbler, that had a bull and a bullfighter painted on it, and something written in foreign words about Malaga, and as he stared at it he remembered that it had been given to him by his uncle and aunt. Presently, Henry picked up a Russian sable paintbrush, and put it inside the glass tumbler. Then he said in a happy tone, “Oh, that’s all right, then there will be three Art-lovers off to lunch.”

The name the Art-lovers had been dreamed up one night after Henry Bowers had met a group of new friends: Sandy, David the DJ, and Kim the Wonder Kid, in a club called Maestros. The aforementioned from then on were known as Art-lovers. Everyone, who met them in the pubs and clubs in the city of Glasgow, knew that they were interested in art, in one form or another.

David the DJ, for some reason, that morning did not turn up, so at one o'clock Henry and Sandy headed down town for something to eat in the finest seafood restaurant in Glasgow. However, as they walked together, Henry couldn't help but wonder if they would bump into the DJ on the way there.

Not far from the flat the young artist laughed at the way his friend Sandy Squirrel walked. The male model looked at everyone on both sides of Sauchiehall Street, as they came towards him. And as they walked he talked non-stop and constantly pulled at the sleeve of his Italian suit jacket. Sandy smiled at a handsome young man on the other side of the road, then he turned to his friend, and said, "Oh, don't worry about the DJ. He'll turn up like the proverbial bad penny, that one."

The Rogano before it became a restaurant had been a Victorian bodega bar selling, straight from the cask, sherry and whisky. The first and second parts of two surnames made up the name, and good fortune, around nineteen hundred and thirty-five, had gifted the bar Art Deco. The main feature of the bar was a mural of Aphrodite rising from the sea in a scallop shell.

During lunch Henry told his friend all about Art Deco: "It is basically an offshoot of the Liberty Style, commonly known as Art Nouveau, geometric in form, and reflects industry and mass production, from that period."

When the young artist had finished his meal he changed the subject. He said with a sigh, "You know Squirrel, I don't mind not having a daytime job - in fact I love having the free time to paint - no, what I miss is the company of men at work around me."

Sandy heehawed, looked around the restaurant, then he cheekily agreed with the young artist, "So do I, Henry."

Henry, after wiping his mouth, added, "However, in an evil world what more can a man ask for, Squirrel, except health and happiness, and a desire to search for the hand of God in the light of creation." After saying this the young artist picked up his glass of wine, and saluted a lonely old man who was sitting at the table next to him: "To you sir!"

Sandy laughed at Henry and, seeing the young artist's face sublime, the male model declared, "What are you like sitting there. You're like some Old Testament prophet. I think from now on I'll call you Hosea Bowers."

The screaming laugh that followed made all the waiters turn round, and look over at the two men sitting in the middle of the half-empty restaurant.

Just for fun, Henry thought he would continue along the same lines as before, "Yes, it is true, Squirrel, the world is full of beautiful things, and all you have to do is understand the connection of what is out there in the world, and what is inside you - quite simple, really." The young artist then made up a rhyme for his friend Sandy Squirrel: "What is in, is out, and what is out, is in, and what is important ends up here." Henry gently tapped the side of his head, then the young artist lifted up his glass of wine again and saluted the world, "To Art-lovers, everywhere."

Most people when they met Henry Bowers the artist usually said something like: "Oh, you're an artist, are you?" and after staring at him for a considerable length of time, they would wander away, saying, "An artist, eh."

Some people, on the other hand, would act strange in front of the young Henry Bowers, as if he was some kind of mystic guru who had come to tell them all about their innermost feelings. Henry did not like to disappoint them. He would make up art axioms for them to chew over: simple phrases to help people understand the world around them, the universe on all sides of them, and the fantastic cosmos that holds everything: the past, the present, and the future, over them.

During coffee the young artist quoted a few more art axioms to Jasmine, who worked in the Rogano restaurant: "Young lady, art is life, and life is art," he said with a twinkle in his eye.

Jasmine laughed, then she told him, "I'm planning to go abroad this year."

After listening to her talk about the trip she planned to make, the young artist added, "By all means travel, sweet Jasmine, but

wherever you go remember art is the inner expression of the imagination.”

A few days later, in the artist’s apartment, Sandy looked up at the round old-fashioned face of the wallclock. He remembered that he had bought the modern-day antique as a housewarming present for his friend the young artist. He noticed the clock had been fixed to the wall next to the painting titled: Fireplace, in the kitchen-come-studio. Suddenly, Sandy cried out, “Look at the time, I’ve got an appointment with the model agency at half past twelve!”

Knowing he had only five minutes to spare, Sandy Squirrel quickly washed and shaved, borrowed a red and black speckled tie off Henry. Then after dancing around the living room for about five minutes, he stood and looked at himself in the long looking glass mirror in the kitchen-come-studio. “Well, Henry, do you think the camera will like me, today?” he said, and sucked his cheeks in.

The young artist looked up from the painting he was working on, and said with a smile, “Cool for cats, Squirrel,” and as the model shrieked, Henry added, “you’re are a walking photograph.”

Henry, however, after laughing at the job in prospect couldn’t help but worry about his friend in such a butch city. He stared into space for a time as he remembered some vicious things that had happen to some people he had known.

In a hurry, Sandy searched around the flat for some unknown things, and when he eventually came back into the kitchen-come-studio, he said to his friend, “Oh, before I forget, Henry, a friend of mine last night was talking about a chap who has just opened up a new art gallery in the city centre.”

Sandy indicated, with a few clicks of his tongue, that he had heard all about him from his gay friends, “Chat him up, Henry, and if that doesn’t work, I’ll send a few of the boys round from the modelling agency.”

The male model, before leaving, joked about the large green glass bottle under the table in the kitchen-come-studio. He knew it to be Henry’s back-up system in case of an emergency. With one

hand on his hip he said in his best public schoolboy voice: “Henry that bottle is full of coins; you will have to take it down to the bank and get some notes for it. Then we can head for the Rogano, again.”

Henry laughed along with his friend, and after he looked at the huge four and a half-litre whisky bottle under the table, he said to him, “Did you know that the founder of modern sculpture, Donatello, had a basket full of money hanging from his ceiling in his studio.”

When his friend had gone the young artist started painting again, and as he mixed blue with grey he thought to himself, “He such a wonderful person, you know, and so completely different from anyone else I have ever met before. I wonder what will become of him.”

In the spring of nineteen hundred and eighty-one everyone wanted to pay Henry Bowers a visit, but for some odd reason very few did. The art of not being too familiar with people when they move into a new flat could have had something to do with it; however, having said that, when the letter-box of the flat rattled one morning at ten o'clock, Sandy Squirrel jumped up off the settee, where he had slept that night, and he ran to the door.

Henry, after a few moments, heard his friend scream, but the young artist in his studio carried on painting, "Oh, look who it is! It's the man who all the women in Glasgow are after, Mr Cool himself!" a pause followed, and as the flat door shut, Henry heard his eccentric friend add, "Look at the style of it, come in, come in..."

Henry listened to the footsteps as they entered his apartment, then he heard Sandy Squirrel scream, "You look like Aladdin without the lamp, in those trousers!"

David the DJ walked into the artist's studio as if nothing in this life, or the next, could phase him. With a smile he looked over at his friend the young artist, sitting by his easel. Then he said in a detached tone, "Different apartment, but the same old Sandy boy, I'm afraid."

David the DJ worked most nights in a famous club, just off Sauchiehall Street, called Maestros. Although fashionable in dress you could never say David was a victim of the commercial stores: for the DJ had long ago grasped the fact that trends and fashions never really change, they only appear to do so. As regards fashion it seemed to the DJ that what had been forgotten in the present, fashionable in the past, would soon be wanted by everyone in the future.

The DJ quickly looked at the painting in front of the young artist. Then he said in his usual nonchalant way, "So how are you, Henry?"

Getting up from his seat, Henry replied, "Not bad." However, before he put down his paintbrush to shake his friend's hand, the artist looked at the canvas in front of him, and he gently placed a white circle inside the brown eye of the face he was painting.

David watched Henry closely, then the DJ approached the painting and looked at it keenly; after a few moments he said with a smile, "How much will that one go for, then?"

Looking up, Henry put his left hand on his friend's right shoulder, and joked, "Oh, this one here will probably go for two or three thousand pounds in France, or Japan."

Sandy could not keep still for a moment, and he burst out laughing and whooped, "And about two or three pounds in Glasgow."

David the DJ looked at the artist, as if to say, "Will I throw him out, or will you do it?"

With eyes that said he loved his friends, Sandy Squirrel indicated that he wanted to stay, and with another look, this time towards a painting on the wall above the kitchen sink, titled: Venetian Flowers, Sandy said in a low deep voice, "Yes, I've got an appointment with the model agency; I'll need to get going." Then as if to redress things before leaving, Sandy declared in a loud authoritative voice, "Right, Henry, I will see you later."

David the DJ, and the young artist - as the male model headed down Sauchiehall Street, passed the shoppers, the beggars and the buskers - drank coffee and talked about art. Sitting at the

kitchen table the DJ asked the artist if he had given names to all of his paintings, and when he heard he had, David the DJ turned round and pointed towards one that was hanging up on the wall in the middle of the kitchen-come-studio.

With a quick look over towards the painting, Henry replied, "That one there is called: The Man the Mirror and the Light Bulb."

David the DJ smiled and said, 'Right,' then he lifted his mug of coffee up to his mouth.

Seeing his friend interested in the painting, the artist added, "Since you're a good friend, and an Art-lover, I will tell you all I know about it."

Henry got up off his chair, and he walked over to where the painting was hanging on the white wall. After a long look at it, he said softly, "This is a painting in gouache and watercolour, circular in form, that has the face of a man on it who is wearing a soft hat. The man is looking into a mirror, and as you look at his face your mind becomes aware of subject and object. The whole of human thought starts here. And as you stare you start to ask yourself questions like: What does it all mean? Colour and dimension may bring ideas, but your soul still searches on and on: for it wants to know the truth. And as you search in and out of the real and imaginary world you are bombarded by endless questions: Do you know the person? Is it like someone you know? Who painted it? When was it painted? Do people like it? Do I like it? And this knowledge inside you, that is free and independent, searches for the truth. Why do shapes make symbols? Why do symbols make words? Is the image from the world I am living in? Or is there a realm and form of beauty somewhere else in the universe? And if so does it rise up in tandem with human thought?"

The young artist glanced at his friend beside him, and with a smile he added, "Hopefully, these ideas will be of use to you sometime in the future."

David the DJ, as he stared at the painting, seemed to wonder at the words he had just heard, and as he glanced back from The

Man the Mirror and the Light Bulb, his face lit up and he cried out, "Henry Bowers you're a wonder!"

The two men lit cigarettes and, as they stood in the kitchen-come-studio, a wondrous feeling came over the two young men. To mirror this feeling Henry said, "Yes, art has pierced every soul that has ever walked God's earth."

Full of the joys of life, David the DJ wondered about some of his friends, who went to the nightclubs in town, "Just wait till I tell some of the fashionable chic Glasgow nightclub girls about my friend, Mr Henry Bowers, the young artist. Wow man! They'll all want to come over to the flat and see the paintings for themselves."

Henry liked the idea of art bringing people together, and he smiled at his friend, as if understanding the reason behind it all.

David the DJ stubbed out his half-smoked cigarette, and with eyes shining behind big fashionable round glasses, he added, "And I'll be here to give them some good old art talk, Bow Wow."

The two men laughed and they could have stayed together and chatted till well past lunchtime, but the two of them had many things to do. After a familiar slow nod of his head and another look around the room, the DJ got ready to go over to the office of the nightclub company where he worked, "Right, Henry, I'll see you in Nico's tonight."

The young artist walked to the door with him, then he went back and worked on his art for the rest of the day. That night, as arranged, just after half-past nine, Henry met his friend David the DJ inside the cafe bar called Nico's, at the bottom end of Sauchiehall Street.

At the bar David the DJ bought the first round, "Trust me, Henry, Pernod and blackcurrant is a go go," he said with a smile.

The two men stood at the crowded fashionable French cafe bar, as the waiters in their white shirts and long black aprons served the chic clientele of post punks, New Romantics, nouveau riche, and anyone else, who dared to break the stereo type of modern man in the year of nineteen hundred and eighty-one.

Looking at life full in the face at the beginning of the nineteen eighties, Henry Bowers thought the music interesting, "It

may not be as good as the seventies, but it's still good. I think there's a new feeling about. This is an era of change, and if you ask me I think the electronic music is more sophisticated and advanced than the older stuff, but it is still the feeling of the old rock and roll culture that makes it progressive - if you know what I mean."

David the DJ agreed and mentioned some of the new up and coming bands he thought would make it big in the years to come. In a professional DJ voice, he said, "I think The Cars, New Order, and Ultravox, are going to be huge."

The two men also talked about old and new ideas like: post punk, glam rock, flower power, and some of the futurist movements that were on the go. However, their focus on music suddenly expired when they spotted a strange figure, dressed in Swiss shorts and dyed pink hair, coming into the busy night-time cafe bar.

Henry couldn't believe his eyes, but as he stared at the man something told him that he knew the strange figure, "Has my Art-loving friend gone completely mad!"

When the outrageous figure arrived in front of them, Henry asked the obvious question, "Squirrel, why are you wearing Swiss shorts, and why is your hair now the colour pink?"

The bland observation, and the way he asked the question, sent Sandy Squirrel into rapture. When he eventually stopped screaming and dancing about, Sandy held onto the artist and said, "Oh, Henry, darling, you're never going to believe this, but one of my friends - who is a good looking model - never turned up for his photo shoot today, and I had to stand in for him. It was an advert for a travel company," then he screamed again.

Henry, knowing Sandy Squirrel always had a friend in mind, smiled at him and, although he had never seen any of his photographs in any of the magazines, or met any of his friends for that matter, the young artist thought Sandy would be great fun to work with, and he laughed along with him.

When he eventually calmed down, Sandy told them about the hairdresser in the studio using the wrong colour of dye. The

male model, however, after this tried to get his own back. He looked down at the dark red tiles on the floor of the bar, and he seemed to sober up. Sandy blinked a few times like a boy who thinks he is just about to be hit. Then he said to his Art-loving friends, in a calm but angry voice, “Is no one going to buy me a drink, then?”

Probably because of the strange situation they found themselves in, no one said anything, and so after looking at his two friends condescendingly, Sandy Squirrel searched for a waiter and moaned to himself, “Oh, you two are as tight as a duck’s arse.”

After he had paid for his drink Sandy Squirrel looked the other way, as if in the huff. Then he muttered something to the barman: “It would be different if I had a pair of boobs...”

Sandy did not stay in a bad mood for long; he soon turned to someone beside him at the bar, and said, “I wonder if there are any nice men in here tonight who would like to hear me yodel.”

This made everyone laugh and the barman, a handsome blond chap named Alan, shouted over: “Right, sounds good to me, a free drink for Sandy Squirrel the unbelievable yodelling man!” and everyone around the bar laughed again.

The music from the speakers in the French cafe bar in Glasgow played songs that everyone seemed to know and like. David the DJ nodded to the music, then he suggested to his friend, “Listen, I’ve been thinking, Bow Wow, let’s have an art exhibition at Maestros club one night, and I’ll play the music?”

The artist liked the idea, “Yea, why not, that sounds good,” and he made up another art axiom on the spot as a working title for the event: “Popular Art by passing Modernism and Minimalism.”

David would have liked to carry on the conversation, but he knew he had to start work at ten o’clock and, after looking at his large comic watch face on his left hand, he finished his drink, stubbed out a half-smoked cigarette, and said in a quick sure tone, “Right, see you up at the club, Bow Wow.”

The club where he worked usually kicked off around eleven in the evening; however, the DJ had to get there well before that to sort out the records, and check the sound equipment.

Sandy, who had not really spoken to his two friends that evening, noticed the DJ leaving. The male model in a familiar way kept on talking to the strange New Romantic lad, by the stairs at the top bar. In typical fashion, as the young man spoke, Sandy kept his eye on everyone as they came in and out of the French cafe bar. He loved Nico's; in fact he knew the people who owned the place, and had once worked behind the bar.

The handsome male model, as if still working inside the busy bar, continued to search here and there to see what was going on. Suddenly he said in a cheeky tone to the young New Romantic man, who was dressed up in double-tuck pegtop black pants and a white frilly shirt, "Right, Cuddles, see you later," and as he walked away he winked at him.

Sandy Squirrel approached his friend the artist and, in a quiet suggestive serious tone, he asked him, "Can I buy you a drink, Henry?"

Henry, who had been staring at a large comic oil painting on the wall opposite the top bar, looked at his friend. "That would be nice." Then the young artist started a conversation with him, but Sandy Squirrel did not seem interested. The young artist, hearing no reply, changed the subject. Henry said casually, "David is off to work."

Even though Sandy loved the DJ, he remarked, "Oh, him, he doesn't work - he just hangs about there so that he can pull the women."

After thinking about what he had said, Sandy the Squirrel laughed at his own joke, and his handsome face, rugged and boyish, came alive again.

About an hour later, on the way up to Maestros, the young artist looked up at the early summer night sky, and he wondered aloud how it could stretch from Glasgow to the end of the universe and back again: "It looks absolutely fantastic, just look at the way all the blue strands fade from light to dark, and just look at how

there are a thousand shades of pink and white illusions, painted here and there, and see how it all blends together to make-up a story about this world, the one that is past, and for believers the one that is still to come.”

Sandy quickly looked up towards the night sky and, as his eye fell back down onto the dark four storey buildings of Sauchiehall Street, he reflected for a moment or two about what he had just heard. The male model, after laughing, played the fool and took Henry’s arm, and as they walked on he muttered to himself in a deep undertone, “Oh Henry dear, you’re outrageous.”

It was customary that when the bars stopped serving just after midnight - thanks to the new late night drinking laws - everyone fell out onto the city centre streets. As if holding late-night meetings the people gathered here and there in doorways and beside parked cars. They chatted to each other as if tracing some sort of perfect pleasure plan. Presently, they moved on towards their next goal. In a strange way as everyone moved up and down Sauchiehall Street, the young artist saw the night world as something symbolic, rather than realistic.

The young artist, walking beside his friend, suddenly pointed towards a crowd of young men and women on the opposite side of the famous street. In a moment of wonder, he cried out in broken Latin: “Festino Lente!” then he shouted over to them in English, “Take your time lovers of the night!”

Maestros had been going for about an hour when Henry and Sandy got there. The manager of the club, standing at the door beside two bouncers in black suits, saw the two men coming up the steep hill, and he turned to the Billy Bunter steward, on his right-hand side, and said in a jocular tone, “Watch out here comes the artist and his model.”

Henry and Sandy chatted with the handsome manager. Then the kind man told them to go in as guests. Tugging at his left hand sleeve of his suit jacket with his right hand, Sandy Squirrel walked towards one of the two bars inside the club. After he had pushed the door open that led from the foyer to the dance hall, he smiled at everyone who looked his way. The handsome model man said,

“Hello,” in his deep impressive voice, to someone in the crowd, then he added softly: “Nice to see you. Good evening. How are you?” Not far behind him, laughing, Henry followed, and when a space opened up through the crowd he gazed onto the dance floor, and watched a fantastic light show, but he saw no dancers. The young artist, as the strobes danced here and there back from mirror to floor, observed some familiar faces in the Maestros crowd: Post Punks, New Romantics, Techno Robots, Neo Mods - who were now Two Tone - 70’s Blitz Kids, and a few old posers. He knew they were all waiting for the new electronic music to come on.

The young artist said to his friend the male model, “Obviously, David the DJ does not want to play the new wave dance songs too early tonight.”

Sandy agreed and in a suggestive tone, he replied, “Yes, he is teasing them. He will give it to them soon,” and he winked at his friend.

When they got to the raised level of the club, Henry could see the DJ in his booth, down at the left-hand side of the dance floor. The DJ, after he had placed another record on the turntable, spotted his two friends up at the bar. He immediately pressed the button that allowed him to speak over the playing record. The DJ, as he danced from side to side inside his booth, announced in a trained radio voice: “Henry Bowers, the famous Glasgow artist, has just entered Maestros,” then he let the switch go and the record played full volume once more.

Sandy turned round and laughed sarcastically at his friend the artist, then he retorted, “You will be signing autographs, soon, when you come in here.”

Even at the bar, where it was brighter, no one seemed to notice - or even bother about - the man with the dyed pink hair who wore Swiss shorts. That is not until a man with a goatee beard, standing at the right hand side of the main bar, shouted, “The last time I saw a pair of legs like that, there was a message tied to them!” and some people at the bar turned round and laughed.

The voice belonged to old John the faithful roadie. When Sandy Squirrel heard his voice, he sprang towards him and tried to pull his beard. The male model then screamed, as he tried to pull the roadie down onto the dance floor, "Come on you old fool, I'll show you how to dance."

Old John the roadie pushed him away, "Get off Squirrel."

Sandy shouted back, "Come on, shake those old bones!"

Henry loved the nightclub characters, to him they didn't seem to come from the concrete world that started at nine in the morning and finished at five o'clock at night. They seemed to be from another world - a world of their own creation.

Two people next to him at the bar typified what he meant: "I'm going to buy a Moog synthesiser, start-up a band, and I'm going to make records, and just for a laugh appear on Top of the Pops!"

"So am I. In fact, I have already written a song," said the other voice, "it goes something like this..."

The two of them may, or may not, have been full of hot air, but it made the young artist, as he stood at the bar of Maestros nightclub, wonder about the many abstract conversations that must have taken place over the years in places like this. And after a few artistic thoughts, he concluded, "I bet you the only stories that survive in life are the unbelievable and outrageous ones."

The fascination of words moving through time made the young artist reflect further: "Before man could read, and before history had been invented, he had no other way of understanding what this world was all about, apart from what was said through the human voice. Man must have had to make up his mind about all sorts of things in all sorts of places - fat chance of me believing anything I hear in here - that's for sure."

Above all things, Henry Bowers wanted his name to be remembered, in space and time, as an artist.

'Yes, Henry Bowers painted pictures like no one.'

'Oh, when you stand in front of a Henry Bowers painting you can feel the real world coming at you.'

“Yes, that’s what I want out of life,” whispered the mind of the young artist Henry Bowers, as he stood at the bar of Maestros nightclub.

Henry grasped his thoughts and, as if to arrest them, he placed them in the real world of time and space, by muttering to himself, “Yes, I want people to look at my paintings, and feel life and be free: for art belongs to no one.”

Just then David the DJ put a popular twelve-inch dance-mix on the turntable, and as one or two people started to dance the DJ walked through the crowded club towards the bar where Henry and Sandy were standing. In his usual way, David the DJ tapped a fag off the young artist, then he said to him, in a comic matter of fact sort of way, “There’s a few lovely pieces of gimp in tonight, Henry.”

Henry laughed and, just as a tall sexy New Romantic woman in a black suit walked by him, the young artist replied, “Yes, I see what you mean.”

David smiled and suggested in a nonchalant voice, “Let’s pull a few of them back to your place tonight, Henry, and have a bit of fun.”

Sandy understood the power to charm; he knew life to be an unknown powerful force where opposites not only attract each other, but also mix one another up, for the sake of sex. The male model, however, made a joke of it all, “Yes, Henry, you can paint them and the DJ can poke them.”

Sandy screamed another wild laugh, and held onto the young artist. The male model then banged the bar as if to signify a classic line had been said in the famous club.

David the DJ wondered if he should have a drink, and when Sandy Squirrel offered to buy him one, he said quickly - hoping he would not renege, “Jack Daniels and Coke, Squirrel.”

The DJ finished his drink quickly; he felt in a cosmic good mood tonight. Suddenly, he sensed something in the air, and he promised himself that tonight would be a good one. After this he headed back to his place of work ready to press the boogie button - as he put it.

Watching him walk away Sandy Squirrel said in a low passionate voice, "He's an unbelievable character, isn't he?"

A few moments later standing at Maestros bar Sandy, after looking at a poster of a film star at the side of the bar, said out of the blue to the young artist, "I would have liked to have been around, you know, in the golden age of Hollywood."

The young artist smiled at him, for sometimes he felt that life overtook his friend, Sandy Squirrel, and thrilled him so much that when he came back to the modern world, of nineteen hundred and eighty-one, he was still stuck in another time zone. Sandy agreed with this, and said that he had been born in the wrong era. "I guess he must see what he likes in the present world that somehow relates to something in the past, or something in the past that somehow relates to something in the present," mused Henry.

Meanwhile, down on the Maestros dance floor the music seemed to run ahead of time, as around four or five hundred people danced the night away in Glasgow's top nightclub.

Henry watched the dancers for a time, then he shouted to Sandy, "Come on let's dance, Squirrel!"

And as they danced, Henry remembered the first time he had set eyes on his friend, the male model, "He had a long gaberdine coat on that night, and he was dancing with some friends who belonged to a theatre company - a wild sight for any young artist to see."

Henry loved to dance, and as the lights and the music pulsed around him, his soul seemed to glide away to a perfect world, somewhere beyond the present one, where no forms, or facts or regulations existed.

The DJ also moved to the music inside his DJ box; however, when he spotted old John the faithful roadie, standing at the side of the consul, he shouted over to him. And when the roadie came over the DJ shouted against the music, "John, you see the two blondes over there - tell them I want to speak to them!"

When the two blondes arrived over in front of the DJ box, a few moments later, David the DJ introduced himself. He asked them if they liked the club. They both seemed to like it and

grinned; however, knowing that to rush them was to lose them, the DJ lit a cigarette. Then he cheekily said to himself in an undertone, "You two look pretty funky!" and casually danced his head from side to side.

The words hardly said anything, but they certainly suggested something. Not long after the bar shut, in the small hours of the morning, David the DJ placed a slow smoochy record on the turntable. Looking up he saw his friend close by, and he shouted to Henry to come over and meet the young ladies.

After bringing down the sound level and mixing the last slow record into play, the DJ turned to where the two blondes were standing, and he said with gusto, "Ladies meet, Henry Bowers, the famous Glasgow artist."

David looked at Henry, and after the artist had shaken hands with the two young ladies, the DJ added, "Affectionately known as Bow Wow to his friends."

Soon the crowds of people disappeared and, as the lights went on all over the club, the bar staff moved over to a corner area for a staff drink, where ten minutes ago people had kissed and hugged, and made plans for life.

No one really said anything at first, so Henry just smiled, and then David the DJ jested with the two blondes, "Why not come back over to the artist's flat, and see some of his etchings?"

This made everyone laugh, and the two young ladies - who had only met each other on the dance floor an hour ago - seemed to like the idea; so after the last record had faded away, the three Art-lovers and the two blondes headed outside and went down Scott Street.

Henry and Sandy went first, and as the young artist talked to Squirrel he could hear behind him David chatting up the two young blondes. In the dark night halfway down the hill, David full of sang-froid asked one of the two blondes to carry his records; and once organised he said to the other one, in a plain but cheeky voice, "So how come you two fabulous looking ladies are not married?"

The one he spoke to did not answer at first, she held onto the rail for the hill was steep. As if to get her bearings she looked down over the railings and found a misty sign that read: Textile Centre. Then she gazed into what appeared to be a dark dead-end world down below, and as she walked on slowly she thought about what she was going to say. Then she answered cleverly, "Haven't you heard darling, life in the eighties is all about having fun."

The other blonde shared the same philosophy, and after laughing she said in an everyday sort of way, "Yea, that's right, we girls nowadays just wanna have fun."

Henry turned round to see how far behind they were, and in a quick glance he caught sight of three figures, two dressed in light summer clothes, and one in a dark suit about ten yards away.

Henry Bowers had never owned a flat before. He had always stayed in a safe and secure home with his parents; however, the time had come for him to buy his own place, but this was all new to him bringing people back - he had never met before - to his house to entertain them. Just before entering the close, and going up the stairs, Henry looked left along Sauchiehall Street, back towards the late night precinct, and in that instant he thought about all the times when he had to make his way home out of the city to the south side.

His mind mumbled: "Yes, I remember all the times I had to run for a late night bus, and all the times I had to wander around looking for a cab - always avoiding the bams who are always full of drink and drugs. And I remember how in the morning, tired and washed out, I had to get up for work and travel back into the city."

Henry, as he pushed the close door open on the street level, turned and looked at his mate Sandy Squirrel. Then he added to the words he had just been thinking, "Not any more, Henry Bowers, now that you are an artist living in the heart of the city you can slip in and out of your flat whenever you like, and on nights like this get to know the beautiful people," and he lifted his eyebrows.

Sandy read his thoughts and laughed his funny laugh, then he held the door open for the three figures behind him who were now

coming across the dark street, "Come in ladies," he beckoned to them in his best public schoolboy voice.

After looking at the paintings on the walls, and the ones lying up against it, in the kitchen-come-studio, for some reason everyone seemed to forget all about art. When they got through to the living room David the DJ sat down on the dark red velvet sofa, between the two blondes, and Henry and Sandy sat in the comfortable chairs opposite them. The flat seemed warm even though it had been empty for a few hours.

Presently, they all started discussing mundane everyday topics like: papers and magazines and the people who were in them, and the folks who were making lots of money out of them. Old John the roadie rattled the letter box about half an hour later, and when he came in he wondered why the door had no nameplate on it.

David the DJ looked up at him and said condescendingly, "He's only just bought the place, give him a chance."

The roadie nodded his bald head over at the artist, as if to say, "Only joking, Henry," then he looked over at the two blondes on the dark red velvet sofa, and nodded at them, too.

The roadie certainly looked different, and although bald on top, his sandy coloured hair fell halfway down his back. Henry thought he looked like the recluse Howard Hughes, or moreover like the Old Blind Guitar Player by Picasso.

David the DJ wondered if it would be all right to light the hubble-bubble pipe and shoot the moon, and he looked over at the red plastic pipe that he had left on the mantelpiece a few weeks ago. Henry didn't seem to mind. The pipe was duly passed round, and in no time at all smoke belched from it.

Sandy did not like smoking and he opened a window in the front room. Henry felt the late night air drift in and, as it came in along with some voices and cries from people still outside in the dark night, the sounds seemed to connect with the dope and flavour it with freedom and ecstasy, and many other vices from strange faraway places.

When he returned to his seat Sandy screamed at the wild crazy scene, "What are you like - you lot!" Then he got up off his

seat, and when he stopped laughing he sucked in his cheeks and made a face at the DJ, "It's unbelievable," shouted the male model, then he stared at the ladies.

Henry laughed, lit a cigarette, then he indicated to old John the roadie to pass the hubble-bubble pipe by him."

Sandy Squirrel, after going out of the room, marched straight back in again. He picked up something from the coffee table and, as he stared at the object, he repeated mechanically to himself, "You lot are off your heads."

One of the two blondes took the hubble-bubble pipe and tried to inhale the smoke, but she got nowhere. Quite upset she stood up and threw off her flannel wrap coat-jacket, and gave it one more go. This time she took the hubble-bubble pipe in her mouth and she sucked hard, making her white cotton V neck top reveal angles of her small white firm breasts; but she didn't get anywhere with it, and fed up she handed the pipe back to David the DJ, saying brusquely, "What a stupid thing."

In the smoke filled room the conversation never really strayed very far from individual needs, freedoms, pleasures, and opportunities, in a wonderful ever-changing, transient, low cost mass produced world. David suggested fame as the game to get you everything and anything in this life: "People respect you when you are famous, and you can have endless amounts of pleasure for the rest of your life, and the way to get it is to become a star." Thinking about what he had just said, the DJ mused, then added, "It only takes just one hit record - and you've made it for the rest of your life."

Just then, the young artist thought up an idea, and proposed it to the two young blondes: "Why not start a band, girls, and call yourselves The Candy Bride Dolls, and tour the world."

Everyone laughed at the name, and all of a sudden a point of agreement seemed to be reached between the Art-lovers and the two blondes. Then the conversation thereafter drifted into leisure pursuits, and what perchance might be pleasure and pain in the modern world of nineteen hundred and eighty-one.

Henry noticed that one of the blonde's had painted her eyes, with blue eye shadow, and the other one had painted her eyes with red eye shadow - both in broad brushstrokes as was the fashion of the time. He also noticed that even though the two women had never met before they talked openly - sometimes obscenely about life - and that in the end they always agreed with each other about each other's way of thinking. Henry Bowers the young artist searched their faces for clues as to why a material world seemed to have everything in it for them.

As the young artist stared at the blonde young lady in the white cotton V neck, who had painted her eyes blue, she strangely led him, with her light blue-grey eyes, all over her slim body, and even more strangely he felt her sex set him free from any intellectual art thoughts that had been running around his mind. Henry smiled at her and drifted with the music that was playing on the tape machine; he felt the lyrics could have been penned just for that moment.

By this time Sandy - who was kneeling on the floor - had finished teasing old John the roadie about his beard. He turned round and looked over at David the DJ to see the effect of dope on his handsome fair skinned face. Sandy stared at him for a few seconds, then he laughed: for David's face seemed to be lost in a sea of shoulder length mousy brown hair, as he sat there between the two blondes on the red velvet sofa. In his usual style, Sandy jumped up from his chair, sat back down again, then went down on his knees again on the floor, stood up, and then sat back down in his chair again; eventually for something to do he walked over and changed the music on the tape machine. Looking back at the men in the room, he made fun of the song as he moved away from them: "Don't you want me baby..."

Henry thought about suggesting one of his favourite tapes from his shoulder bag, that he had dumped in the kitchen-come-studio; however, at that moment, David the DJ said something to one of the two blondes, and they all got up off the red sofa and walked out of the room. Just at the door the DJ turned round and signalled to the artist to follow him. Inside the bedroom the two

blondes sat on the bed and, after a moment or two, the two of them started crawling around it, as if looking for fun.

Henry Bowers the artist had made love to women before, but it had always been inside the realm of them being alone together, and always after they had got to know each other. This situation seemed totally different to him. It seemed like someone else's dream. David sat down beside Henry on the edge of a bed, that had no legs on it, and they started chatting to one another. The DJ said calmly, as if nothing was out of the ordinary, "I'm still thinking of going abroad, you know..."

In a night that nothing seemed out of the ordinary, the taller of the two blondes stood up on the bed as if suddenly charged with electricity, and she said something about sex being fun, and something about life being wild and untamed.

David looked at his friend the artist, and through his large round spectacles Henry could see his eyes flicker with excitement. That excitement came into being when, for whatever reason, the two blondes started kissing each other. They were soon undressed, and wearing only high heel shoes and suspenders. The fun atmosphere now had lust and passion mixed together, and all that had gone on before - in the way of understanding between the sexes - suddenly vanished in the mind of the young artist.

Noticing his glasses all steamed up, David the DJ took them off to get a better look at the beautiful bottom rising up in front of him. He said in a slow comic voice to Henry, "Better leave them alone, Bow Wow."

Henry thought the whole thing quite outrageous, and he laughed when he thought to himself, "I wonder if I've got time to go through and get some drawing paper and charcoal, and do a quick life sketch."

Any thoughts of proportion, or for that matter aesthetics, however soon vanished in the young artist's mind, when erotic sex came together in a strange and fascinating new way in front of him. It was as if the centre of the universe had just opened up, and now to parallel the meaning of time, and the meaning of life you had to enter it.

The following day the artist changed his mind about how he thought he should lead his life. He knew fine well that too many nights like the one last night would drive him out of his mind - and moreover he would never get any work done. "I have got to put all my energy into painting and drawing, if I want to become a great artist," he said to himself as he washed and shaved.

When Henry thought about the second century dark marble statue from Hadrian's Villa of the Older Tormented Centaur, and how the arrows of lust were fired into the Centaur's back, he started to understand how life can tantalise you, make you lonely, and leave you godforsaken. The whole attitude of love and sex, and sex and love, seemed a strange one to him when passing ships made bright signals at each other.

At midday, from his window, the young artist gazed down onto the famous street running through the heart of the city. He watched the people walk up and down, and for a time the natural everyday scene seemed to tell the young artist something about the fantastic voyage of life: "After you get high it's always the same feeling you have the next day. You feel isolated and there is never anyone about to comfort you." Henry laughed at his thoughts, but he knew they were true: "You will end up in the gutter, Henry

Bowers - in queer street. And when people walk by you they will say, 'There lies the body of a once great artist. He had it all, and he gave it all away for a life of debauchery,' and your enemies - the art critics - will see to it that whenever your paintings go on show, it will be the artist - not the art - that will receive all the attention - what could be more obscene."

The young artist would be as elusive and mysterious as the great Vermeer. He would leave no trace of himself, just like Pieter Bruegel. And if he were to die young he would be anonymous like George Pierre Seurat, leaving only one photo of himself in black crayon.

Hoping and praying for a return to a peaceful mind Henry Bowers looked again out of his town flat window and, as he looked down onto the busy famous street below, something told him that beauty and strength came from a higher plane than sex and lust could ever hope for. And to represent it in any form you had to flow with the power of goodness. The Stone Age man who drew the La Greze bison knew this, and so did the artists in ancient Greece. As the young artist's eyes came back from the midday travellers going up and down Sauchiehall Street, he thought to himself, "The meaning of art must be when you start to understand what an image means in a spiritual way."

That afternoon Henry painted a cross and gave the title: Risen, Matthew 5.16. The young artist, after he had finished painting it, stood back and looked at it, and for the first time he started to understand the true meaning of symbolism. And as he stared at it a profound thought came into his young mind: "Everyone thinks they have the keys to heaven on earth, but only one man has, and through him we learn."

Henry worked hard and after a few good nights out at Maestros, with David and Sandy, the weekend came and went. The young artist Henry Bowers kicked off another week by getting up early on Monday morning. He organised things so that he would be free in the afternoon to show his paintings to some important people in the city. A selection of twelve paintings came together nicely for the forthcoming exhibition: *Fashion Squares*. The

young artist, after placing the paintings here and there around the flat, uttered to himself, "Yes, that looks good, I'll take them round to that chap Sandy recommended: Herbert J. Hoffman, who has a gallery in the city centre, and see what he thinks."

The young artist felt it best if he let Monday morning pass away quietly. It was still early and he felt hungry. He spread golden honey onto some brown bread on the table in the kitchen-come-studio. Then, switching on the electric kettle by the sink, he thought to himself, "People are never at there best on Monday morning. I'll go down sometime in the afternoon."

Henry, in fact, planned to go down to the gallery and introduce himself to Mr Hoffman around two o'clock. He would ask him if he could bring in some of his paintings, along to show him, later on that afternoon. So that day just before 2 o'clock, Henry Bowers, the young Glasgow artist, left his flat and walked along the precinct. It was a beautiful day and he felt good. Henry, as he walked, looked here and there at all the buildings on both sides of the famous street. The young artist marvelled at how the spring sunlight popped out from behind dark clouds and silver shadows just to kiss all the beautiful faces, and how it magnified itself on windows and doors, as it fell here and there onto rooftops, and ran along gutters just to hide in all the secret places of Sauchiehall Street.

The young artist followed the light and marvelled at how it would hide here and there, then return like a precious friend to surprise someone. Henry loved the light, and as he walked he thought more about it: "Even if the sun just peeps out for a second or two it gives so much hope and so much inspiration to everything it kisses. Look how it beams off cars and busses and buildings. And if I were a poet, and not a painter, I would write a poem about it." Henry whistled a happy tune to himself and some joyful words inside his head ran here and there: "Sun you are the source of light and heat, and I know you have come an awful long way just to shine on my street?"

Feeling on top of the world the young artist ran through the shoppers till he reached the end of the street, and there standing at

the traffic lights, out of breath, some more crazy words carolled in his mind: "If sunlight were words I think they would say, I'll be back in a minute, don't run away."

Through a square pane of glass outside the gallery, Henry Bowers could see Mr Hoffman sitting at his desk. The young artist, as he looked in through the window, tried to sum up the situation as best he could: "Well, well well, Herbert J. Hoffman has a fine modern art gallery, indeed. He is a large man who has chosen art to make himself money. He looks as if he is from the upper class and has never had a working class friend in his life."

The owner certainly took up quite a bit of space in the small pane of glass. Mr Hoffman looked relaxed as he leaned back in his big black swivel leather chair, at the back of the gallery. The young artist, as he stared at him, couldn't help but think to himself, "He looks like a whale on a beach."

When the young artist pushed the door open he heard Herbert J. Hoffman say, in a pompous voice, to someone on the other end of the telephone, "Oh, yes indeed, it will make thousands of people redundant. The same sort of thing probably happened when the industrial revolution came along, I would say..."

A very attractive young lady, dressed in a dark blue two-piece suit, who had long blonde hair and heavenly ice-cold blue eyes, came forward to meet the young artist. Although she spoke in a business voice her tone was very relaxed, "Can I help you?"

Henry stared for a moment into the ice-cold blue eyes of the beautiful young woman. Then the young artist smiled and replied, "I've come to see the owner about my paintings."

The attractive assistant looked at him as if her initial impression had not been correct. Then she inquired, "Are you an artist?"

Henry smiled and for some reason thought about the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, and how he had once declared that the artist possesses a weaker morality than the thinker: for the artist appears to be fighting on behalf of the greater dignity and significance of mankind.

“Well, I suppose it could be true,” reflected Henry, and he smiled at her.

“Yes.”

The attractive young woman quickly turned round and looked towards the back of the modern gallery. Seeing the owner busy on the telephone, she replied, “Oh, he’s rather tied up at the moment. Anything,, I can do?”

The young artist did not say anything and, after a long pause, she suggested, “Why not have a look around the gallery - he shouldn’t be too long.”

Henry smiled and looked over at some of the paintings on the wall in front of him. The young artist feeling in a good mood just let the colours come to him, and for fun he imagined himself to be inside one of the paintings wandering around. Sometimes he could do this and forget all about the important things that come together to make up a piece of art: lines and figures, perspective and proportion, light and shade, planes and shapes.

Not faraway the young assistant watched him and, as she put her hand inside her dark blue suit jacket, she searched for something. Henry looked at her again and she looked away. Not long after placing a pen on top of the old-fashioned wooden desk beside her, she turned and said to the young artist, “That’s Philip Robson’s painting titled: Blood Sunrise.

The painting has just been bought by a Dr Fahad, from Saudi Arabia.”

Henry looked at it again and this time the large red dot in the middle of the pyramid became something real, and he thought about the desert and the young artist wanted to go there.

Looking back from the exotic scene and into the ice-cold blue eyes of the gallery assistant, Henry smiled, and as he looked away he felt something magical pass between them like a midnight kiss. Then hearing her say, “Do you like it?” Henry, half-asleep, replied, “Yes.”

The beauty of the young lady for a moment quickly added to the image the artist had in his head, and as reality streamed back into his mind, the young artist caught the natural highlight colour

of her long blonde hair. And for some reason when she moved her hair over her shoulder, Henry remembered the two strange young women from the night before, and the beauty in front of him faded. Feeling a little bit awkward the artist looked down onto the floor, and there he caught sight of another painting titled: Photorealism. Henry read the words under the title: The Strange Atmosphere, by someone who went by the name of Dylan Jones. With a smile Henry thought about some of the paintings up against the wall, back at his flat, and he said in a natural tone to the assistant, "Yea, I have got a few paintings still to be framed, too."

A few minutes later, Henry looked over at the gallery owner, and watched the man stretch himself out like a whale on a beach again. The gallery owner, still on the phone, said in a self-important way, "Yes, it's quite true. I'm thinking of going to America this year - France and Italy are getting awfully expensive - they say that modern art was born in the states, you know, and made assessable to the public via the CIA to undermine the Soviet system." After a laugh and a cough, the whale on the beach added in the same pompous voice, "Oh, yes, I'll try and get that cheque off to you next week," then after listening to whatever was being said on the other end of the telephone, the gallery owner went on, "I was just reading in this morning's newspaper how Mrs Thatcher says the recession is coming to an end," and he listened keenly down the phone for a reaction to see if it were true or not. Presently, he started talking about America and modern art again, then the whale on the beach said, "Most of what is going on in the art world at the moment is coming from painters like: Louis, Frankenthaler, Noland and Olitski..."

Henry wondered how long the gallery owner would be on the telephone. The young artist looked over towards his assistant to see if she knew. As if to say sorry the young assistant looked at Henry and raised her eyebrows. Then after a sigh, she said, "Shouldn't be long now."

Henry felt like saying, "Some people live on the phone - you wonder why they don't stay in bed and shout down the phone from there!"

Just then, Henry heard the gallery owner say, "It could very well be market forces telling us something about the arts. The government I know is very keen to see art become part of the enterprise culture. Modern thinking is very much against social aleatory art."

There did not seem to be any letup in the conversation, and Henry couldn't help but notice the relaxed way Herbert J. Hoffman answered the caller. The young artist thought he would be there for a while. As he stood there he looked across the room, and watched the assistant in the shop. The young lady in a lazy afternoon kind of way spread out the morning Glasgow broadsheet newspaper across her desk. Henry watched her as she forgot all about the art world, the whale on the beach on the telephone, and the young artist in the salon.

However, just at that moment, she looked up from the newspaper and gazed out of the gallery window at the new nineteen eighties enterprise culture whizzing by her quiet salon. He could see she seemed to sense something out there taking place in the future and she stared at it for a few moments, then she went back to her paper. The young artist - knowing fine well that the print, or the pictures, would take her away from the present world again and transport her into a land of universal principles, priorities, and facts - walked over to her, and said evenly, "Tell Mr Hoffman that Mr Henry Bowers the artist came into see him, will you," and then he walked away towards the door.

Feeling embarrassed the beautiful young lady looked back over towards the owner's desk at the back of the gallery, "Yes, as soon as he comes off the phone, I'll tell him," she said slowly.

Henry left the gallery and made his way back home, and as luck would have it when he reached the start of the pedestrian precinct, just outside the austere ashlar bank building at the corner of West Campbell Street, he spotted a familiar figure in a leopard

skin coat crossing the road. Hardly thinking about how he should react, the young artist shouted, “Kim!”

Kim immediately turned round, and when she saw who it was she made a daft face at him. It was as if she wanted to show him that somewhere in her imagination, that very morning, she had visualised them meeting on the famous Glasgow street. Kim, in a familiar gesture, opened her mouth as if to mock him, then she came across the road and made another daft face at the young artist. When she got close to him, she said in a coquettish tone, “So what have you got to say for yourself then, Henry Bowers,” and she pushed him ever so gently.

The artist smiled at her and trying not to laugh he hit back, “Where have you been?”

A flicker of realism came into her beautiful dark chestnut brown eyes, as if she was for the first time waking up to a new time, a new culture, a new era; and as she smiled back at the young artist she wondered about many things - but most of all she wondered about how to manipulate natural contact with a friend on one of the most famous streets in Glasgow.

Kim looked down the long line of shops, bars, and restaurants, that made up a crazy colourful pattern all the way to Charing Cross. Then she laughed at the chance meeting. When she spoke to him she turned her head slightly away from him, so as not to giveaway any of her secrets about how to exploit the opposite sex, “I have just had lunch with some of my art student friends,” she said in a playful voice, and she looked at Henry Bowers the young artist, as if to say, ‘How about that, then.’

Henry would have liked to say, “Oh, that sounds absolutely wonderful, darling. Lots of chat about neo-impressionism, Novecento painting, the Apollinaire tradition, High and Low Renaissance, Futurism, but after thinking about the people concerned he just smiled.

Kim knew Henry liked the art students, but she also knew that the gift of art had not been given to Henry Bowers in an academic sense. No, Henry had the freedom of art: when Henry painted the moon and the stars guided him. Kim knew that if

Henry had gone to art school he would never have got any work done: “Too many interesting distractions there,” she thought.

Kim took Henry’s arm and, as they turned towards the street she caught her own reflection in the window of the old-fashioned baker’s shop, just opposite the cinema, and for fun she pulled the young artist inside the shop, “You know I could go another coffee,” she said, with a daft smile on her face.

Henry laughed: for he could have lived on Sauchiehall Street for a thousand years, and he would never have thought about going in here. The unexpected scene seemed to transport the two young things back to a time when fashion had completely disappeared, and where everybody was now only interested in talking about silly things like, who was leaving who, and about friends and lovers and the things they do. “Love is a timeless kiss on a forgotten face,” whispered Henry’s mind, as he glanced at Kim.

As they both walked inside the tea room Henry looked at some of the faces of the old women sitting inside the door, and his crazy thoughts as if to break the spell imagined himself shouting: “Right wake up, you lot, it’s time to go back to the real world out there of nineteen hundred and eighty-one. A world full of fashion and fads, civil servants on strike, corrupt unions, never-ending B.B.C. news reports about murderers, rapists, and no use politicians!”

Strangely enough no one in this queer out of the way little tea room seemed to notice the two young impressionable new wave things come in. Henry couldn’t help but laugh at the situation. He thought to himself, “Here am I with a fashionable post punk lady, who everyone looks at outside, but in here no one seems to mind.” And in a flight of fancy he declared, “New wave Kim must really be just an old-fashioned thing.”

The young artist, as they sat down inside this quaint little tea room, glanced at her black punk hairstyle, and he wondered how the golden rays from the sun were still highlighted in her hair. Henry had known Kim for just over a year now, and during that time he had let himself go with her. But he felt that she had

brought him close to her because she was vulnerable. Love seemed for her to be an uncut diamond - and a diamond was an object not to be shared. Henry thought it all quite funny and he blamed it on the fairies for making mind games a fashion during the New Romantic period of his life in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-one. In fact, he had once said to her during a debate on love in her apartment, "What is there to think about anyway when two people love each other?"

Lifting a small handwritten menu Kim, as if understanding his thoughts, made a face at Henry, then she smiled at him. Presently, she opened it up, then she stared over the top of it, opening her big brown eyes wide as if to show him that a woman's thoughts were in a different language from a man's. After a sigh, she said quietly, "It's a wonderful place, don't you think?" Not waiting for the young artist to answer, she added casually, "Of course, what would you know about life anyway, Henry Bowers, you are always in front of the canvas, or up at Maestros nightclub."

Henry did not take the bait. He just listened and smiled.

"You should get out more and see a bit of the world, before it's too late."

Kim laughed at the way she scolded him; but Henry knew fine well that this courage she now possessed came from someone who had just found herself a new boyfriend. He smiled at her as he picked up the small menu from the table. Just at that moment, a young plain Jane of a waitress came over, and as she stood at their table she stole a glance. She was shy and she put her hand to her mouth and half hid a smile, as she tried to understand new wave people and their new wave fashions.

The young waitress, seeing the man in the dark suit and bright red shirt in mid sentence, paused. Then she brought out a pen and gently tapped it onto a piece of paper that she was holding in her left hand. She said politely, "Would you like to order now? and then waited for the new wave people to answer.

Kim smiled at her, as if to tell her that the world was a daft place full of men and their abstract theories on art. Then she

politely closed the little menu and ordered: "One pot of tea, for two, please, and two strawberry tarts, thanks."

Henry, slightly abashed, sat back and, after looking at the young waitress, he started laughing. He said, "I don't want a strawberry tart."

Kim said, "Oh." Then after staring at the small menu on the table, she added in a teasing voice, "Don't you know darling that everything in this life that is worth living for comes in a pair, Henry Bowers?" And she dismissed the young waitress in a charming voice, "That's fine, thanks."

Henry picked up the small menu and he looked at the motif on the cover of it. Then looking at her brown eyes and funny nose, Henry laughed, and repeated mechanically, "I don't want a strawberry tart."

Hardly thinking about it, Kim took off her famous leopard skin coat and, as if playing mum, as her coat fell over the chair behind her, she said, "Well, that's just fine, Henry Bowers, I'll eat the other one," and quite satisfied she pulled at her dark blue tee shirt to straighten it.

Henry glanced at her beautiful medium sized breasts, and a warm sexual image came into his mind, as natural as recalling a summer's day, or rain falling on apples. When the young waitress came back Kim took the two strawberry tarts, and for pure theatre she placed them together on a plate beside her and, as she picked one up, she asked her friend the young artist in a casual voice, "Have you had a nice day, today, then, Henry?"

At first, Henry did not know what to say. He didn't want to tempt fate by saying bad things about the big whale on the beach, who worked in the Fine Art Gallery, in the city centre. The young artist, after taking a sip of tea, replied, "Yea, not bad, I suppose."

Sensing something else in the air, Kim searched for the answer, "Have you seen Sandy and David recently?"

Henry, as the young waitress walked away, looked at the steel pot of tea in the middle of the table. The young artist gently touched it to feel the heat and, as he withdrew his finger, for it was hot, he answered her, "Yea, we went to Maestros last night."

Kim casually said, "So what happened?"

Henry thought he had better tell the truth - for what was it to her, anyway: "David invited two fabulous looking blondes back to mine."

After laughing at the image of the two of them jumping around on the bed, Henry added, "He said he wanted to show them my etchings."

Kim repeated in a cool tone, "So what happened?"

Henry paused and, as he looked away, he said, "Well, things got a bit wild, I guess."

Kim studied Henry's face as if to divide the images into sense and nonsense. Then she heard him say, "I guess it was a bit like a film."

Hearing the tone slightly boastful, Kim quickly retorted, "Yes, a film titled: Two blondes and two sad blokes."

Henry became serious and said, "Well, what was I meant to do, run out the door of my own flat."

"Oh, that's right you're the artist, you had to take part and I suppose take notes, so that you can learn from life and imitate it in art."

Feeling that she had just climbed a mountain, Kim picked up the second strawberry tart as if it were the prize for the journey. Then she added, "You'll learn Henry Bowers, you'll learn."

The endless game of getting what you want out of someone continued for a while, and as he listened to Kim, Henry Bowers reflected, "Well, I guess this sort of thing - retribution between friends - has been going on since the beginning of time. It's not the endless questions as regards what a friend has been up to that annoys me - no it's the argy-bargy. Why do people knock each other down? I guess friends who are not quite sure what relationship they want from each other, for some reason, tend to tear each other apart as they look for the truth."

Henry knew it wouldn't be long till Kim started talking about her new love again.

“Richard is taking me to see Goldie Hawn in Private Benjamin at the flicks tomorrow night,” and she made a face at the young artist, as if to say: “Lucky old me, eh.”

Henry to begin with had found him interesting. The first time he had met him he liked him, but the second time he had come across him, Henry thought he had really changed. It was as if all his imagination had been destroyed by the new right wing enterprise culture going around at the moment. It appeared to the young artist that now all he wanted to do was talk about this or that venture that would make him lots of money, and of course the MG car he was going to buy with it.

Aware that her friend was thinking about him, Kim said in a strange voice, “He’s apparently got a few bob, you know,” and she opened her mouth as if to laugh.

Henry looked at Kim and although he had heard what she had just said, the young artist thought to himself, “You know you could have been a movie star if it wasn’t for that funny little nose of yours.”

Kim sang a few words of the popular song about being in love with a German film star and, as if caught by lovers and friends on the other side of time, she stared faraway. Then as she hummed the tune again she fell out of the daydream and back into the real world. “I think we may go for something to eat after the film,” she said plainly.

“Yes, I’m sure you will, but I just love the way you make daft faces at me. It’s as if you want to tell me that you’re just an ordinary outrageous girl in a ridiculous mixed up crazy world. You seem to me, at times, to be fascinated by men who are fascinated by you, and you love nothing better than for them to show their feelings when they are not ready and willing to...”

“I worry about you, you know, Henry Bowers,” said Kim, when she noticed Henry stare at her.

The two new wave creatures sat in the old-fashioned tea room in Sauchiehall Street, till half past four. Then they went outside onto the famous street, where the late afternoon sun welcomed them by blinding them as if they had just come out of

the cinema. As he screwed his eyes up, youth and hope once again danced in Henry's heart, and as they walked together Kim hummed the chorus again about the German film star, by the band the Passions. Then to suit herself, as she took his arm, she turned the romantic scene inside out, "Maybe Richard will take me to see them when they come to Glasgow."

Just at the corner of West Campbell Street, the young artist asked her in a relaxed tone, "Kim, do you want to come up and see some of my new paintings?"

Even though she did not think anything of it, Kim replied as if recent events could make a world of a difference, "Better not, Henry, I'll phone you later."

Henry did not think much about it either, for he knew love, romance, and sex were awkward things, when fashion made them fascinating things, in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-one.

Kim, as if in a hurry, kissed the young artist goodbye, then she thought about getting everybody together for a night out. She said in a natural good hearted tone, "I'll phone you soon, Henry, and we will all go out for a drink."

In no time at all, she ran across the road and disappeared in amongst the walkers, shoppers, and talkers on Sauchiehall Street. Henry lost sight of her outside the house that had been erected for a coachbuilder, now called the McLellan Galleries. Henry, when he got back to the flat, started working again. He tried to correct a line that had suddenly appeared against a brush stroke in a painting he had titled: Victory. And as he sat there in front of his easel the young artist thought about many things: "Even though I'm happy with my work, the rest of my life seems to be fragmented. When I'm with my friends they all appear to be hiding their destiny from themselves, it's as if it is not what they wanted, or had intended. They make up scenes and situations just to fool you..."

The young artist's mind then drifted to where he thought he was going in life, and his heart sunk when he realised that the country he had been born into had no real interest in developing art, "Even in this so called enterprising modern era, Scotland has

a beer drinking, football, outlook to life: the spirit of the plebs. They say the northern races are not romantic - well that's for sure. When someone cries art the herd up here only accept it in a foreign sense. What we need is an art revolution, in short: art for everyone."

Henry wondered why people were so apathetic towards art in his home country and, as he put down his paintbrush for a moment, he picked up a large colourful art book that he had bought sometime ago. The young artist read about the Lindisfarne Gospels, dedicated to St Cuthbert. He studied the Cross-carpet page that introduced the Gospels. Henry, after putting the book down, promised himself, "Yes, there has been originality not far from here, and there will be again."

Henry sat back and started thinking about how the early Christians were freely expressing their artistic styles before the end of the second century. Then he went back to the painting in front of him, and he hoped that the line he had taken out a minute ago would dry and not go against the form of the painting. In a dream moment, he told himself, "If I ever write a book, I will expose the art world for its hypocrisy, and tell the good people how the dealers and the traders have no real interest in art. They are just full of fashion and flannel - developing art is the last thing on their minds."

Modern man does not extend his hand of friendship till he sees your cash," then he laughed when he thought about himself writing a book: "They say writers have to live on the moon these days if they want to write good books: for it is quiet there and moreover no one from the evil enterprising culture can bother them. Anyway, I bet the horrible crowd who control publishing in Edinburgh would try and put an embargo on anyone from Glasgow writing a book." Yes, at that moment it seemed easier to go to the moon than to bring forth a new art project from his home city, "I wonder if I will be able to buy a ticket to go to the moon one day - maybe this space shuttle, that there going to launch later this month, will be able to go there and back again - who knows."

The young artist liked reading books and sometimes as he sat there in his studio he recalled the things he had read. Just then, he thought about Albrecht Durer the first man to write an art book. Henry looked over his right shoulder to where the book lay on the floor, and he remembered the engraving: The Knight, Death and the Devil. Henry thought it must have been wonderful to live in a time when art was everything.

When the young artist caught a reflection of his own face in the windowpane, inside the kitchen-come-studio, his face in the glass seemed to bring him back to the present world of nineteen hundred and eighty-one. Henry cursed the modern up and coming enterprise culture and the way he thought it was going, "Soon they won't even extend the hand of friendship to you until they see you're one of them. They will soon be afraid of anything that does not fit inside the framework of the new enterprise system. And moreover they will be no men left in industry to shout against them, because everyone will be walking about as if they are their own boss - market whores!" Henry laughed at the words that appeared in his mind and mocked himself: "Henry Bowers the well-known art anarchist, artist and novelist."

Just at that moment, he saw some of the figures come alive in his kitchen-come-studio, that he had come across in the art world and it made him angry: "Yes, it is an interesting painting, Mr Bowers, and it may well be *Zeitgeist*, but it is not what the market wants."

Another fop answered back, "British art has been subdivided into: pre-Raphaelite, Aesthetic, Olympian, and Decadent. We worship the straight line you see; you must believe in the sensation of the moment - market related of course."

Then another voice said, "Yes, it is an interesting painting, Mr Bowers, but what we are after is a collage, colourful, geometric and abstract - for the business world you must understand."

Henry wondered about the function of the art dealer, the critic, and finally the buyer. Then he looked up at the print of the painting: *The Starry Night*, by Vincent Van Gogh - that he had

put up on his studio wall the very first day he arrived in his new flat. And he thought to himself, "He knew all right."

A few moments later with a worldly smile on his face, the young artist said to himself, "Now, now, Henry, they might not all be like that. Give the whale on the beach, who owns the gallery in the city centre, a chance."

Henry sighed then walked into the living room and he tried to relax for a few moments. The young artist did this by looking down onto Sauchiehall Street. He loved to watch the people walk up and down the famous street. As he stood there, Henry recognised a face passing by the cinema, on the other side of the road. The man, aged about fifty, he remembered used to travel on the train with him when he lived on the south side of the city. Like so many others tonight he was now heading home after work. The man's well-bred face and gaberdine raincoat reminded the young artist about the place he came from: "I remember when I lived in the country I used to dream all the way into town on the train, and when I got there I would look out of the window at all the people rushing here and there - just like I do now. And the people would somehow rouse me, as if to say, 'Wake up, wake up, Henry, you're in a different world now,' strange how time passes, and people move on."

The artist opened the window to let some fresh air in to the living room, then he straightened the red velvet curtain beside it, "Now that's a straight line isn't it," he thought to himself, then he laughed at how art has everyone on the run in society. To kill time Henry sat down and picked up *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak. He opened the book at page 256 and read something about how art could never be a category, or a realm, in which innumerable concepts and varied phenomena are housed, "Quite right, *Zhivago*, quite right," he said out loud, when he eventually put the book down.

That night in the kitchen-come-studio when the big hand was at twelve and the small one at one, on the round wall clock, the young artist put down his paintbrush. He walked into the living room to relax for a bit. Henry once more looked down on to the

famous street below him, and watched one or two people walk through the dark city. Then after about ten minutes the young artist went back into the kitchen-come-studio, and made himself a cup of black coffee. One of his paintings that was lying in the middle of the table reminded Henry that he had to go back, tomorrow, and see the man who runs the fine art gallery: Mr Hoffman.

Suddenly, Henry came up with an idea: "This time I will take a few of my paintings down with me to show him - I may not get another chance."

Just then, the telephone rang, and Henry walked into the hallway and picked it up; he heard loud music playing in the background, then he heard voices; it sounded like a nightclub. Suddenly, someone spoke in a drunken tacky voice, "Is that the Fu Wong restaurant?"

The young artist, feeling in a good mood, replied back in an eastern accent: "No, this is not the Fu Wong restaurant. This is the Gallery of Modern Art. We have all kinds of paintings here from all types of places. Modern Art, you must understand, is nothing more than what you think it is: a toilet, a target, a white flag, a monogram, a torn poster, a sheet of metal..."

The caller seemed to sober up. He said tentatively, "What's that mate!"

Henry added in a sweet voice, "We also do a nice hot picture plate of food. We can do it for you on a canvas, on a painting board, or on a beautiful naked lady..."

The man put down the telephone. Henry took it that the caller did not want to order anything in the way of modern art, and the young artist went to bed.

The next day around midday Henry put down his paintbrush. He walked over to the kitchen table, took a spoonful of Australian honey, and made himself a cup of tea, and as the kettle boiled he searched for a large plastic carrier bag for his paintings. When he was organised, the young artist stood in the middle of his kitchen-come-studio, and looked at himself in the full length mirror lying up against the wall, "I wonder if this dealer, Mr Hoffman, knows anything about art, or moreover does he appreciate it," he murmured to himself, as he unbuttoned the collar of his shirt.

Just before leaving the flat he cleaned his teeth, and after rinsing out his mouth the young artist studied his face in the bathroom mirror. Henry as he stared wondered about all the wonderful things in life like: change and decay, destiny and fate. Then the young artist walked back into the hallway, fastened his dark double-breasted pure new wool check jacket, and this time he picked up a silk white scarf, á la, 1920's style. Presently, he tied the scarf around his neck, and let it drop inside his white cotton shirt. Henry picked up his keys from the table by the door, and in his usual way he put his fingers through his brown shoulder length hair with his free hand. Then he picked up the plastic bag, now

full of paintings, and once more the young artist went outside into the big world in search of someone to help him with his art.

Henry imagined that there would be quite a few people looking around the gallery by this time. He closed the door to his flat and, as he went down the stairs towards the street, he smiled to himself as he heard a voice inside him say, "They say the art world doesn't waken up till late on in the afternoon - should be able to see someone now."

This time, as he approached the Fine Art establishment, Henry Bowers looked up at the fancy sign that read: Herbert J.Hoffman, Fine Art Dealer, and he smiled to himself. The young artist, after looking at the words above the door, exchanged hands to take the carrier bag, from his right hand to his left hand, so that he could open the door. Before going inside the gallery, the young artist once again looked through the little square pain of glass, above the silver handle, and once again he spotted - under the many hanging golden spotlights that seemed to be everywhere in the establishment - the large frame of the dealer at the back of the gallery. The owner, Mr Herbert J.Hoffman, just like yesterday was stretched out like a whale on a beach in his black leather swivel chair. The only difference Henry noticed from yesterday was that he had his feet up on top of his desk beside a bundle of papers. This time through the small window frame the young artist spotted a small black statue, and what looked like a modern lifeless word processor on top of his desk.

Inside the gallery, the young artist smiled at the assistant with the ice cold blue eyes, and ignored the three other people beside her, who had come to see the paintings in the modern art gallery. Henry after a moment or two walked over towards a glass case on the right-hand side of the gallery that had some quaint old but new jewellery, now in fashion, inside it. Then he moved over towards a mahogany table where some books and magazines - that the rich like buying - were lying. He noticed that all the art books had little tiny labels on them, and so did some of the fancy postcards of well-known famous paintings. The expensive price it seemed had always to be written in small figures. Henry leafed a

book and when he came across a picture of a famous male model he at once thought about his mate Sandy Squirrel. Then he glanced over at the carpeted spiral staircase where paintings, that would have been called modern a hundred years ago, were hanging.

In the background, he heard the dealer, Herbert J.Hoffman, say to someone on the phone, "Isn't it fascinating, Cubism in Italian means mother, and hobby horse in Russian," then the gallery owner went on to quote something about the aesthetics of lighting and mobility, and then Victor Hugo: "Yes, I quite agree form is the essence brought to the surface."

Henry opened an art book, and read: *'In painting, the contour is a matter of idea and convention just as it is in sculpture, and should arise naturally out of a proper arrangement of the essential parts,'* then as he looked at a photograph inside the red diary, he read the name: Eugene Delacroix.

The young artist, after a few moments, heard the whale of an art dealer shout out in delight, "What!" then after a pause add, "Oh, no, you don't have to go to Persia to learn how to play chess - I wouldn't do that..."

Henry turned round and flicked his eyebrows at the ice blue eyes of the assistant to let her know his thoughts. She, however, turned away embarrassed, and started talking to one of the three customers beside her. Henry felt like laughing; in fact he felt like shouting out, "Brilliant, Hoffman, but if you do go, be sure and take your phone with you, and your comfortable chair - you fat lazy..."

Just at that moment, he heard the art dealer say, "Charles, I'll need to go, someone has come in to see me."

The young artist slowly moved towards the centre of the room and then up towards the desk where the owner sat, at the back of the gallery. Herbert J.Hoffman, when he finally finished talking, put the telephone down, and looked up at the tall slim exotic figure of the young man in front of him. Standing up slowly, the art dealer said suspiciously, "How can I help you?"

The young artist introduced himself, then added, "I've brought three of my paintings along. Can I show you them?"

The owner of the gallery looked down his fat nose at the white carrier bag. Then he asked the young artist in the same slow pompous tone as before, "Who told you about this gallery?"

Henry thought of replying, "Eh, my mate Sandy Squirrel," but he never, he just said modestly, "I walk by your gallery every day, and I thought I would just come in and see you."

Henry brought out a painting and placed it on top of the busy desk of the dealer, and searched his face for a reaction. Herbert J. Hoffman gazed at the painting, titled: Fireplace, but not a flicker of genuine interest penetrated his big round red face. He only stared over his expensive reading glasses at the painting for a few seconds. Then, as if for something to do, he looked at the papers and letters on his desk.

Henry could not understand why there was no reaction, "Doesn't he like my painting? Why doesn't he see what's there?"

A moment or two later, as if looking for something to say, the art dealer said to the artist in a supercilious tone, "Did you go to art school?"

Henry did not know what to say, so he gazed at him, then the word, "No," jumped out of his mouth.

Suddenly, the atmosphere changed and, as the artist wondered what art school had to do with art, he read the name on the wall beside a large painting titled: Mainstream, James Bangor-Jones RSW, and the name of the artist seemed to tell him everything about the skin deep society who despise the working class. The young painter, however, did not take the bait; he handed the dealer his second painting titled: The Man the Mirror and the Light Bulb.

Mr Hoffman seemed to come out of a reverie to look at it, and this time Henry felt something penetrate his being. When the man moved his lips, the young artist thought he was going to say something kind to him. The dealer, however, spoke in an even more supercilious tone than before, "I don't think I can help you,

as I have said before, I only display people who have been formally trained at art school.”

The telephone rang at that moment, as if arranged, and the gallery owner picked it up and said, “Yes, Herbert J. Hoffman, Fine Art Dealer, speaking.”

With a heavy heart Henry Bowers put his paintings back in the plastic carrier bag and walked out of the Fine Art establishment. Back at his flat the young artist hung the paintings up on the kitchen-come-studio wall again, and as he did so he felt the uncaring world, full of esoteric business people, crawl out from under the floorboards and suffocate him. “Why can’t they just try and be helpful?”

Out of the blue, the telephone rang, and a friendly voice in a deep tone said, “Hello, Henry, dear, I’m on my way into town, I’ll be up in five minutes.”

The male model on the telephone, right away, noticed the flat tone of his friend’s voice and, as if life was a cosmic drama played out for someone else’s fun, Sandy Squirrel reprimanded the young artist: “Have you been seeing that Kim the Wonder Kid again?” and hearing no reply the male model shrieked, “Oh, for God’s sake, Henry, what’s up with you?”

Henry, although feeling much better for hearing a friend’s voice, replied, “I’ll tell you when you come up, Squirrel.”

So about half an hour later when Sandy Squirrel, the friend of the young artist, appeared up at the flat, he made a fuss of the young artist, “Oh, don’t let that old fart get you down. There are plenty of other galleries in town where you can take your paintings to.”

The male model then as usual wandered around the kitchen-come-studio. And as usual as he walked he pulled at his jacket sleeve as if he was about to get stuck into the dishes that were lying in the sink. After a few minutes he stopped walking, and said, “You’ll get there, Henry, take my word for it your genius will be appreciated one day.”

Henry looked out of the window and although he hardly heard what his friend had just said, he replied mechanically, "Yea, I'll get there, all right."

Thinking about the Fine Art Dealer, Herbert J. Hoffman, Sandy Squirrel screamed and went down on his knees again, "What did he say to you!"

Finding no immediate alteration, Sandy added in a coquettish tone, "He's probably been out all night at the Vintners Bar, where he goes to, with some of his sweet boyfriends."

Sandy laughed a wild laugh, and as he danced round the room in the fashion of the time, Henry wondered aloud: "What, or who, are sweet boyfriends when they are at home, Squirrel?"

The outrageous Sandy Squirrel screamed another laugh, then put on the kettle, 'I'll make you a cup of tea, dear - that will cheer you up.'

The handsome male model, after complaining about the mess of the flat, picked up an empty cup from the kitchen table and, as he went to drop a tea bag into it, he said in an angry, but kind, tone, "Oh, all you artists are the same - paranoid beyond belief."

Henry, hardly thinking about anything, sat down on the chair by the kitchen table and mumbled, "Yea, yea, I suppose so."

Thankfully, Henry's spirits soon picked up, and for pure theatre the young artist stared at the hessian wall opposite him, and mimicked the art dealer's voice: "I only exhibit artists who have been formally trained at art school," and he puffed his face up to imitate the look of the whale on the beach.

As Sandy screamed, the young artist added to his own artistic thoughts, "You must understand the market place is far too sensitive a thing to take on new artists every day. It would get so upset, and the pound would go down, and the dollar would fly out the window along with the Yen, and numerous businessmen, who had all invested in last year's art, would all kill themselves - how wonderful this life would be if we could all be artists."

Turning towards the kitchen window that looked out onto the back alley, Henry pointed as if seeing a vision. Then he stood up

and blazed as if reporting for a live radio station: “A fine art dealer in the city centre of Glasgow, who has lost all his savings in an art deal, has just thrown himself from his office in Sauchiehall Street. And as he falls he is shouting his last words at the capitalist maggots down below, who are all waiting for him to die. If you listen you can hear him scream as he falls to his death: Aaaaaaaa! No, we can’t take chances with aaaaarrt - not in the modern world anywaaaaay. It will start an art revoluutiooon,” Henry screamed and he slapped the kitchen table and all the pots and paints, that had been lying there, flew up into the air, “Henry then added in a calm voice, “I think he is dead!”

Sandy loved this piece of theatre and he signalled his delight by dancing round the room again, and saying, “Oh, Henry you’re getting worse.”

It was not so much being rejected that upset him - no, it was the lack of enthusiasm, and the want of help that annoyed him more than anything - and even though Squirrel laughed and made light of the situation, the feeling of indifference made Henry angry: “I’ll show them, they can’t keep a good man down. Where there is a will there is a way. I know what I’ll do, if I can’t get my paintings exhibited, I will become an art anarchist. I will go around this city of no culture and spray paint art axioms on walls and on buildings. Yes, I will waken up this evil city. I will shake people free - I will show them that there is a way out of this modern nuclear nightmare, and they will come alive again.”

Sandy, seeing his friend in a better frame of mind now, sat down beside him at the kitchen table. He said in a tender voice, “Yes, Henry, you can do it. There is only one Henry Bowers,” and the male model nodded, and tapped the young artist’s hand, before looking into his brown eyes, “Yes, and one day your paintings will sell all over the world.”

Henry understood the market place, and the fear it had of fashion. People would not buy this or that, if they did not see it in a newspaper, or on television: “If it’s trans-avant-garde this year, then fine, and if it’s old-fashioned Art Deco next year, then fine

too - as long as we all know what we are supposed to be buying,” he thought was the idea.

But the artist knew that style has to change with the times, and he - the artist - must be at the forefront of the new movement when it comes.

Henry, as he stared at Sandy Squirrel, made up another art axiom, “Always ready is the artist.”

The problem at the moment, he thought, was that nothing seemed to be happening, there were no new movements, no new styles, and consequently no new art. He knew that the Germans were up to something: Neo Expressionism. They were for the first time expressing their thoughts in paint since the Second World War. At the beginning of the year there had been an exhibition in London titled: A New Spirit In Painting, and many of them had been invited to show their works.

Henry, however, was looking in a different direction. Looking back at the Fine Art Gallery scene, Henry reflected, “It’s a bit like being at a party, and waiting to sing your song, but the host for some reason objects to you because you are from another generation, or because you stay in the wrong street. In this city, in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-one, ignorance has become fashionable and vanity has made people insular.”

Henry from that moment started to write his art thoughts down in a little book: “Art against society,” was the first axiom he wrote down, and he smiled to himself as he added another, moments later, “Art will always change the world.”

Just then a mad wheeze came into the artist’s mind, and he suddenly got up from the chair by the kitchen table. The young artist stared at the old-fashioned face of the clock on the wall, as if the connecting figures were already linked to the future. He said to his friend the male model, in a quiet voice, “Back in a minute, Squirrel.”

Sandy picked up a fashion magazine, looked at it, then he joked, “I hope you won’t be as long as that chap who climbed Everest.”

“No, I won’t be long, back in a minute.”

The male model, as the artist left the flat, screamed another wild laugh, but when he was all alone in the flat he looked around at all the paintings, and bits and bobs of art scattered here and there in the kitchen-come-studio.

Sandy turned on the radio and, as he sat there in the kitchen-come-studio, for some reason he felt sad; it was as if he understood tragedy and how it identifies with the artist, and the time that surrounds him.

Sometimes Sandy Squirrel couldn't believe the world he had landed himself in. Presently, the male model got up and wandered around the flat and, as he continued to look here and there, he said to himself in a wondrous voice, "Unbelievable, he really is unbelievable..."

About half an hour later Sandy heard a knock at the door, and wondering who it was he went to answer it. As he walked he clicked his tongue twice, and feeling happy he whistled the melody of the Spandau Ballet song that was playing on the radio.

When he opened the door a tall figure in a Jewish hat and coat, with a long black beard spoke to him, "Oh, excuse me, sir; I may be at the wrong flat, but I am looking for my brother, a Mr Wallace Cohen. Does he live here?"

Sandy looked at the strange figure and, feeling annoyed, the male model leaned up against the doorpost and glared at the man. After a moment or two, he replied in an unyielding voice, "No, he does not live here - this is the residence of Mr Henry Bowers the famous Glasgow artist, and I am afraid he is out at the moment."

Suddenly, a beautiful smile crossed the face of the man with the beard, and his eyes flickered with delight, "No, he isn't," he said.

Sandy screamed as the man at the front door took off his hat and beard and walked in to the flat. In no time at all, the young artist and the male model were heading down Sauchiehall Street in the direction of the Fine Art establishment run by Mr Herbert J.Hoffman. The art gallery was now busy with businessmen, shoppers, and ordinary people who had just dropped into see the exhibition of new paintings by Lucian Daykin titled: Raw Data.

The dilettantes inside, for some reason, never seemed to take any notice of the handsome male model, and the Jewish rabbi as they walked into the gallery.

Sandy looked towards the back of the shop at the large figure in the black swivel chair, who was on the telephone, and he whooped to himself, "Oh, it's unbelievable, old Hoffman will blow a gasket when he finds out who it is," and then he turned away as if to hide himself.

The owner added to the scene when he said in a loud pompous voice on the telephone, "You must understand the gallery is only a gatehouse for art. It is not a place of worship. People who come here want to invest some of their hard earned cash on something that will give them pleasure. Art maybe the new religion, but the dealer has the final say."

Then he paused and added, "Yes, and this is why Herbert J.Hoffman is still in business; and I hope and pray that the art world does not change in the foreseeable future. Goodbye sir."

Henry looked at Sandy as if to say, "I told you, he's a nutcase."

Sandy stared at his friend the young artist, dressed up as a Jewish Rabbi, and he could hardly contain himself. The male model felt like going down on his knees and screaming.

Before moving over towards a large canvas, on the left-hand side of the gallery, Henry whispered some strange words to his mate Sandy Squirrel, "Let's not wake up the art world till the final act," then he winked at him.

Old Hoffman took another call, and to calm himself down Sandy the Squirrel walked around the gallery, as if looking for a friend in amongst the dilettantes. After a second or two, the male model glanced back at the man who had put on a false beard and Jewish long black coat and hat and, to stop himself shrieking, he muttered to himself, "Old Hoffman will have a canary when he finds out who it is."

Henry looked over at Herbert J.Hoffman once again, and as usual he found him on the telephone with his feet up on the desk. The young artist quickly looked away, and as his eyes came back to

the shapes and colours on the canvas in front of him, a picture titled: Decline of the West, Henry caught the wonderful ice cold blue eyes of the assistant looking at him.

The assistant watched the strange figure in the long black coat and hat, then after a second or two she came forward and said in a sweet voice, "Can I help you, sir?"

Henry tried out his Jewish voice again, "No, my dear, I'm just waiting to catch the eye of the dealer when he comes off the telephone - a little bit of business, you understand."

When he had finished speaking, Henry heard a strange sound over at the other side of the gallery. It was the male model. The young artist knew he was trying to suppress a famous Sandy Squirrel scream, and he turned away from her. Not long after this Herbert J.Hoffman said in his usual way, "Right, good hunting, speak to you later," and put down the telephone.

Henry had not acted out one of his characters for a long time, but he looked forward to the challenge. Without hesitation the young artist fixed his eye on the bulky frame of the gallery owner, Herbert J.Hoffman, and walked straight over to him. On the left hand side of the gallery Sandy Squirrel, and the assistant, both stared at the bearded figure in the long Jewish coat and hat, as he moved towards the back of the gallery. The young artist, in a precise manner, said in a serious voice, "Good afternoon, my name is Solomon Cohen, and I am the head of the committee for arts for the south side of the city."

Hearing the unusual tone the gallery owner stood up and slightly tilted his head, so that he could look at the man over his expensive silver half-moon reading glasses. Sandy Squirrel moved towards the door in case a fight started, so that he could do a runner.

Henry noticed the gallery owner's eyes widen, as if trying to understand the scene. To relax Henry glanced at the picture behind Mr Hoffman, before adding, "It is with regret that I have to inform you that two of my members, from the south side arts community, have made a complaint against you."

Old Hoffman looked as if the man in front of him had said something to him in a foreign language. He responded quickly, "I'm, sorry," he said, and he took off his glasses.

Henry, to show that he meant business, looked into the small eyes of the gallery owner, Herbert J.Hoffman. Then he said sternly, "In short, Mr Hoffman, the paintings on show here today, in your Fine Art Gallery, are all forgeries," and after a dramatic pause, the young artist added, "for I know where the real ones are."

Old Hoffman's cheeks blew out air as if he had just been handed an interdict against him. The artist tapped his right foot on the ground, before adding in a loud voice, "Yes, it's true, Mr Hoffman, all the paintings on show here today are forgeries."

Old Hoffman stammered, "How do you know that?"

In the midst of the drama, Henry looked down at his desk, and noticed - half-hidden in a drawer - a strange magazine with naked men on the cover. Then he looked back at old Hoffman and raised his voice, "How do I know that! I know that because the chap who painted the pictures is part of my local art class, and the poor man is on Unemployment Benefit, and has a wife and five of a family to feed. That is how I know that, Mr Hoffman!"

The small crowd in the gallery was now at the theatre, and in the confusion the dealer scratched his big bald head, and as if trying to relax played with some childlike curls at the back of his neck. Then he searched for his assistant's face in the crowd. The art dealer now completely baffled, stuttered, "Well, I only met the artist once, and he seemed a reasonable chap."

Herbert J.Hoffman looked for his assistant again. Then he declared, "You know, I only exhibit people who are formally trained, and who have been to art school."

Henry could have very well there and then pulled down his beard, and shouted, "You stupid old fool, Hoffman!" but something told him that he had a few more lines up his sleeve to say. Trying not to laugh, Henry added, "There is also a few other things I would like to discuss with you, while I am here, as regards your social behaviour."

Old Hoffman said a very big, "Oh."

"Yes, at night, you have been seen inside the Vintners Bar, cavorting with male prostitutes, and it falls to me Solomon Cohen to ask you to resign from this gallery at once, and let someone decent take it over."

Henry turned and walked smartly away towards the door, as if he had just passed sentence on an evil man in society. When he got to the door old Hoffman seemed to realise the joke that had been played on him, and he shouted, "Get out of here you impostor! Get out of here! I'll get the police!"

I guess no one will ever know if old Hoffman, the big shot art dealer from Glasgow, recognised the man in the black coat and hat as Henry Bowers the famous Glasgow artist - who had that day brought pictures to his gallery.

Henry and Sandy Squirrel fell out the door laughing and, as they did so, they heard some of the dilettantes say: "What's this all about?"

"Who has Herbert been cavorting with?"

Round the corner from the Fine Art Gallery, Sandy screamed with laughter till he found himself down on his knees, "What made you think about male prostitutes?"

The young artist replied in a self-important tone, "Well, strange as it sounds, Squirrel, this morning I read in the paper about a member of parliament who had to resign for the very same thing. So, I thought, well, if it is good enough for him - then it's certainly good enough for old Herbert J.Hoffman."

Still not quite believing what had happened Sandy Squirrel screamed, "Outrageous, Henry, you're outrageous."

The days and weeks in April seemed to go by themselves like ghost trains going nowhere and, as they went by, Henry Bowers, the young artist, painted many pictures, read many books on art, and went out with friends. He also wrote many letters to important people in the city asking them to help with the cost of his first exhibition: Fashion Squares. By this time Henry's redundancy money had been used up, and the young artist could no longer bear the cost of paying for frames, or for some of the other expenses like: hiring a vehicle, or lighting, or advertising.

The new Conservative government, for whatever reason, had left the art world to go it alone, and state sponsorship of the arts had all but disappeared. The young artist felt that the powers that be - as far as funding went - were trying to put layers of bureaucracy between the politicians and the artists: 'Go to the marketplace ye artists,' was the new philosophy.

So the begging bowl had now to be taken to the marketplace, and the artist was expected to pamper the new entrepreneur. It all seemed to come from the prime minister's economic adviser, whoever he was: 'Reduce the rate of growth of money, cut public spending, and privatise the British economy,' and this message seemed to ring out everywhere.

Thinking about the changes, Henry thought to himself, “Blimey if, Fashion Squares, the exhibition, is ever to get off the ground, I’ll need to get on my bike and beg.” Henry, as he sat in front of his easel in the kitchen-come-studio, laughed at the beggar inside the artist on a bike going from town to town: “Would anyone like to buy my art?” he shouted at the illusion.

At the outset, Henry felt good about meeting people from the world of business. The young artist reassured himself, “If society has to advance, business needs art, just as much as art needs business.”

This rosy picture changed, however, one morning when Henry opened his mail. Three letters from two banks and a brewery all had the same text in them: *‘Thank you for inviting us to sponsor your exhibition, Fashion Squares. I am sorry to inform you that on this occasion we are unable to assist you as the relevant budget for this function is fully extended. Good luck elsewhere.’*

As Henry threw the letters in the bin, he wondered to himself if every company used the same computer programme when dealing with artists: “A programme they no doubt file under the heading how to deal with people in the arts who are looking for money - stranger things have happened, you know,” thought the young artist.

Staring at the bin where the letters now lay, Henry promised himself, “I’ll change their attitude towards art. I’ll show them. Art is far too important a subject to be rejected by a few industrial snobs.”

Henry wrote back asking them to reconsider their position, but he knew they would not reply. The young artist, as he put the letters into envelopes, laughed to himself and marvelled about the image of modern man in the nineteen eighties, “I wonder what the new business man buys in the way of art these days. I can’t see entrepreneurial art taking off, though. Maybe the new art-lover will just buy what he, or she, thinks will sell in the future.”

For some unknown reason just then the huge letter A came into the young artist’s mind, and Henry wondered aloud: “Yes, Art against insular business - that’s an appropriate art axiom.” Henry

thought for a moment, then he telephoned his friend the male model, “Right, Squirrel, meet me at Nico’s cafe bar at one o’clock this afternoon. I feel it’s time for an art attack on this boring old city of ours.”

When Sandy Squirrel saw Henry coming into the cafe bar, he shrieked, “I know you are a painter, Henry, but what’s this - you look like a painter and decorator, dressed in that boiler suit and silly cap!” Sandy took a step back as if to take the vision in. Then he looked down, and when he saw the large tin of brilliant blue paint, beside the young artist’s black army boots, Sandy screamed, “You’re like a factory worker on his lunch break, ha, ha, ha, ha!”

Henry, not to disappoint him, acted like an uncouth factory worker. Without a care in the world, he stubbed out his cigarette on the dark red tiled floor. The young artist, as if lacking in social manners, spat on his hands, then he rubbed them together. Directly after this, he said in a rough Scottish voice to the barman, “Pint of lager please, mate!”

Nico’s wasn’t all that busy, and after looking around Henry turned back towards his friend, and he said with a smile, “Well, Squirrel, what do you think of my new character?”

Before paying for his pint of beer at the bar, the young artist produced a business card, from the top pocket of his boiler suit, “There you go Squirrel, Henri Matisse, Painter and Decorator, at your service,” and he handed him the plain business card.

Henry, after he had finished his beer, promised to tell his friend, Sandy Squirrel, all about his plan: “Come on, I’ll tell you on the way back into town.”

Just before they turned off Sauchiehall Street into West Campbell Street, Henry said in a surreptitious voice, “I have targeted the brewery company that has its office in the city centre of Glasgow.”

When they arrived outside the building, Henry looked at the cans of beer inside the glass display cabinet. The young artist wondered aloud, “Why have they got cans of beer from the last decade still in the window? Look Squirrel you could have had this girl in the morning, and this one in the afternoon,” he said

pointing at the glossy pictures on the old cans of beer. "I wonder why they haven't got into the eighties yet with enterprising young ladies and enterprising young men on their cans. Why haven't they got new slogans on the cans yet? The marketplace will determine everything! Long live market forces! and all that."

Sandy glanced at the cans of beer in the window of the Brewery company, but when he saw the look on Henry's face he screamed with laughter. Presently, the male model watched the young artist push the door open, and just before he went inside, Henry gave his model friend some instructions, "Right, Squirrel, you're in to pick up your wife - a Mrs Smith."

Sandy just about choked when he heard him say this; he grabbed Henry's arm, and as the young artist pushed the door open, he asked him in a low tone, "But Henry, what if there is no Mrs Smith working in the brewery office?"

Henry thought quickly, "Okay, you're just married, and she has changed her name. There is bound to be a Ms or Mrs Smith working in the building - don't fuss, just sit down and wait for her."

A few moments later, the long grey-haired receptionist looked up to see whose face it was coming in through the door, and then she continued speaking to a young man standing beside her. The receptionist's face did not give the impression that anything seemed to be out of the ordinary, and when she focused on the young painter walking towards her she just smiled at him.

Henry put the tin of paint down on the floor, then he placed a large paintbrush, that he had stuck in-between his belt and his boiler suit, on top of it. Standing up straight, the young artist touched his daft cap and said in a lazy sort of way, "Eh, I've been told to brighten up the reception area. Apparently, some of the big shots are on there way up from London," and as he looked at the left-hand wall behind the modern colourful sofa, Henry added in a common tone, "I guess it could do with it, eh."

The receptionist, as if singing a song, replied, "Fine, fine, no one tells me anything, but that's just the way it is in here - fine, fine."

Someone buzzed the switchboard, then the telephone rang; the caller was looking to be transferred to the sponsorship manager. Henry Bowers, the young painter, moved over to the wall area, and just as he put his can of paint down again, he heard someone cough behind him. "I'm in to collect my wife, a Ms Smith," said a deep voice in a commanding tone.

Whistling a daft pop tune by B A Robertson, the young artist opened a can of brilliant blue paint and, as he slapped the first of three huge lines that would hopefully make up the giant letter A, on the brewery office wall, he thought about the country fields on the way to Eaglesham, and for a moment he wished he had gone there today to paint instead of this crazy scheme. Pretending to be caught between the two worlds, the young artist said to himself, "But one must demonstrate when one is angry; for companies like this make lots of money and fail to help the struggling artist."

Sandy, as he sat there on the colourful settee, couldn't help looking over his shoulder. When Henry caught his eye the young artist wondered if the male model was going to let out one of his famous Sandy Squirrel screams - but thankfully he never. Within five minutes, Henry had painted a huge blue A against the grey wall in the reception area, and no one seemed to notice or even mind. He worked quickly for he knew that if any of the managers appeared in the reception area, at that moment, they would certainly say something to him. The young artist was soon finished and, in a moment of pure theatre, he calmly said to himself, "Oh, damn, I've ran out of cigarettes, I'll need to go across the road and get some."

Turning round, he nodded to Sandy Squirrel to make a move. Then he looked back once more, before leaving the front office of the brewery company, at the huge letter A. The letter stretched all the way from the floor to the ceiling. Henry, as he opened the glass door for his friend, whispered to Sandy Squirrel, "A is for art, they will not forget that - will they," and he winked at the handsome male model man.

Back at the flat, Henry changed into what he called his Chairman Mao suit. The two-piece suit had been designed from a

picture out of the magazine Vogue. The young artist after this went through to the kitchen-come-studio and picked up two long tall glasses and poured Pernod and blackcurrant into them. In a serene voice, Henry said, "There you go Squirrel, let's celebrate our first art attack on our city of no culture," and he handed his friend a drink.

Sandy took the drink and as he looked out of the window he wondered where it would all end, "Oh, Henry, you're getting worse," he sighed.

Henry told him not to worry. He took a drink from the tall glass, then said evenly, "Just imagine some smart aleck walking into the office and saying to the receptionist, "What does the A stand for?" After putting his drink down onto the glass on top of the modern coffee table, the young artist burst out laughing, "I'd better write and tell them just in case they don't know." When he stopped laughing he said in a stern voice, "I will also tell them that if, in the future, they fail to sponsor art - more art attacks will follow."

Henry would have liked it if someone had taken an interest in him, and tried to help him; but for some reason the city and the culture, in the fashionable times of nineteen hundred and eighty-one, seemed deaf to edifying change. Sitting back in his chair, and feeling a little tipsy, due to the afternoon drink, Henry thought secretly to himself: "But I will change that. I will bring art to the forefront of human thought: art against industry, art against reality; for art is our only hope."

Just at that moment the whole of life seemed to flash in front of the young artist Henry Bowers, and as he followed the fantastic images in his imagination he travelled to the outer edge of his experience with them. He was sure that the destiny of the human race lay with the great artist: "Yes, the man who does things in pure spirit, and who pays little heed to the rabble, will always win through. In the past, before the age of TV thought control, people had to either read or talk to someone about life, but nowadays they don't even appear to have a will of their own to work things out for themselves; and for that very reason society has slipped into a

dream state - nobody cares about anyone, or anything, anymore. The important subjects seem to have been subdued and liberated on TV, so many times, that people feel it falls to the TV pundit to fight the good fight. The TV pundits, meanwhile, are only interested in fame and greenbacks. Life has become a sham: nothing is real. Why does no one pick up the pieces? Why does no one try and change things? Why does no one fix their ideals to a cause, and bring the cause into being, in any shape or form? It is the death of life, and no one seems to care; and that is why a mad consuming capitalist mundane society will grow and grow under this right wing Tory government. They will turn mendicants into entrepreneurial beggars, the unemployed into go-getting scroungers; as long as you believe in the logic of market forces, and promise not to have an effect on the living consciousness of the boom and bust days, you will be all right. In fact, revolutionaries will soon be a thing of the past, unless, of course, they can tell you who their customers are. The next generation will live on short-term dreams and short-term contracts. City people will try and hoodwink the public into believing that the land they walk on has only room for a majority of workers: the elite. I bet the government will soon be saying to the people: 'Those who have no work must go back to school and wait.' That is why you must change things now, Henry Bowers. Poverty, and lack of opportunities should never be accepted in any society - especially one where the rich believe that people who are out work can keep them wealthy. Bring the false gods down, Henry Bowers - bring them down with art."

Sandy, out of the blue, asked him, "What are you doing tonight, Henry?"

Henry replied slowly, "Yea, I will probably go out," then he sat back in his chair and, as he lit a cigarette he reflected upon his thoughts once more: "My job as an artist is to, wherever I can, break the spell of thought control. Break the death-life secret before it is too late. I will paint it on walls, and wherever else I can. I will do this so that people will wake up. I will make words shout! My words will change people: wake up you dead men and live!"

The artist thought there would be something in the paper the next day, as regards his art attack on the brewery company. So he wrote a newsletter to all the newspapers in the city telling them that art attacks would continue until the business community woke up from its uncaring slumbers. Throughout that day, Henry kept telling himself, "Art is our only chance, and I have been given this job to see that our civilisation changes and goes forward. I will do it to the best of my ability. My youthful dreams of love may have cracked in the mirror of lost time, but I will not give up on the creative power to challenge people's thoughts: for half of them are asleep in a world that weeps and wants action."

About six o'clock that evening, in customary fashion, Sandy switched on the TV and wandered around the room, "Oh, I'm feeling good Henry - like a new man, something is in the air; I can feel it," he said and winked at the artist.

Henry laughed and he got up off his chair. He walked out of the room, and went into the kitchen-come-studio. The young artist wasted no time and started working on another painting titled: African Man.

Kim telephoned at eight thirty, "I've nothing to do tonight," she said coaxingly to the young artist. "Fancy meeting for a drink in Nico's, Henry?"

It didn't seem long after this that the young artist Henry Bowers put down his paintbrush, and looked down at the painting, in front of him. However, when he noticed the time on the round old-fashioned face of the wall clock in the kitchen-come-studio, Henry jumped up like a shot and cried, "Nine thirty, goodness me, I will need to get going." Grabbing his jacket from the chair behind the door, Henry shouted, "Right, Squirrel, are you coming!"

Sandy, after a few silent seconds, replied in his best public schoolboy voice. He shouted through from the other room, "Henry you go on; I'll meet you down there!"

Henry quickly washed, and after picking up a few things here and there, that he had placed on the kitchen table, the young artist was on his way down Sauchiehall Street, heading towards his

favourite cafe bar. Henry Bowers, just by Scott Street, looked across the road at the small gallery under the Grecian Chambers, The Third Eye Centre; they had refused him space two years ago. And as his eyes came back from the dark dim frontage of the building, he laughed to himself, "I think it's time to decorate that bland place across there with some of my art axioms."

Kim had a habit of being late - not too late, but late. She loved nothing better than to come through a crowded bar and surprise whoever it was that was waiting for her. She loved to open her big brown eyes wide, as if to show the viewer the scene she had just come from: "Oh, sorry I'm late darling, I couldn't get away. George was telling me all about..."

Kim, seeing Henry Bowers sitting in the middle of the bar, sighed and went to meet him. After the familiar opening scene, she kissed him, then she sat down on a bar stool beside him. After bringing down her head so that she could look up at him, she said teasingly, "So what have you got to say for yourself, then, Henry Bowers?"

Henry laughed, and replied, "You're the one that telephoned and wanted to meet for a drink."

Kim, with a lovely smile on her white face, replied, "A midweek drink always refreshes Art-lovers," and she opened her mouth wide as if to laugh.

Soon the two Art-lovers could not only see another weekend ahead of them, but another night out - that very night. For some unknown reason there were a lot of art students in the bar tonight, and the place seemed to be alive with the latest sensibilities of the time. Henry, as he looked around him, really did feel that tomorrow lay in the hands of the young people who sat here and there inside the cafe bar called Nico's. He told himself, "If the evil time does not seduce them, then I believe that the young people of the eighties will surely change things, and bring about an art revolution." Henry couldn't help but admire the style of some of the art students, "They're just so different from the *de rigueur* fashions of the day. I may not be one of them, but I can see that they are doing the same kind of work as I am: trying to change

things wherever they can. I'm sure they don't believe in all that enterprising hype - I wonder if they do - no, surely not."

Kim smiled at a new wave art student, who came down from the top bar, then she made a funny face at one or two other art students in the mirror, who were sitting behind her. Recollecting something about the new wave girl, who had just come down from the top bar, Kim whispered to Henry, "I remember when that punk girl used to carry a kettle around with her as a handbag." And as she laughed Kim added, "You know, it's funny I read in a magazine just last week that someone had designed a handbag, called the Tea Pot. It just shows you one minute you're being laughed at, and the next people are wanting to buy what they were laughing at - outrageous don't you think, Henry."

Henry said, "Well, that's what happens when you join the herd, you are told what to laugh at, and then what to buy."

The young artist offered Kim a cigarette, but she suddenly dashed off and kissed a friend, who was sitting at a table opposite the glass food counter, near the entrance of the cafe bar. The young artist, as he sat on his own, gazed again at all the faces, and all the different styles, around him. Henry laughed when he came across the chap with the 'Oor Wullie' hairstyle, who had on a pair of dark blue dungaree trousers.

Just then, a beautiful young lady who did not have the power in her legs to walk came in to Nico's cafe bar, carried by an honest faced lad; they both appeared to be the same age as Henry. And as they went by the young artist at the bar, he overheard the following dialogue: "She's in. The girl I like is in," said the lad with the honest face. The beautiful young lady being carried in looked about her, then she replied cleverly, "Well, if she doesn't look at you now - she will never look at you," and they both laughed.

Henry Bowers smiled at them, then suddenly Sandy appeared on the scene. The male model spotted the beautiful young lady who did not walk. The young lady, at this point, was gently being placed down on a leather seat opposite the bar. Sandy without thinking rushed over and kissed her. Then he chatted to the honest

faced lad, “Oh, is so good to see you, and you are looking so well...”

Kim came back, after about ten minutes, and when Sandy appeared again back at the bar, he stood up on tiptoes beside his two friends. The male model seemed pleased with himself and he told his Art-loving friends, “You know I feel as high as a kite, tonight - I could run away with a handsome stranger,” and then he screamed one of his famous Sandy Squirrel screams.

Naturally, everyone in Nico’s Cafe Bar at that moment seemed to look over in the direction of the Art-lovers, then things seemed to settle down again; after a few moments of general conversation, as regards what Kim should do with her life - go to art school next year and study textiles, or join the modern world of business and commerce - the Art-lovers ordered some more drinks at the bar. As Henry watched Kim, he sometimes tried to understand what she was thinking about: “Rich men, love, money, hopeless artists, people from other countries...”

Kim slowly took a cigarette out of her white plastic bag and, as if her bag held all the cards to life inside it, she put her hand over it to protect it, then she smiled at the young artist.

Henry said in a charming voice, “You know that if you get a nine to five job you will have to flatten your punk hair style, and sell your leopard skin coat.”

Kim tried to playfully hit Henry, and Sandy laughed, then the male model turned round and smiled again at the young lady, who had just been carried in. Presently, the male model started talking as if everyone in the bar could hear him. In his deep impressive voice, he said, “She is such a wonderful person, you know,” and he waved over to her like a happy child. Then he said, to a perfect stranger walking by, “Nice to see you, you’re looking well,” and he winked at him.

Kim laughed at Sandy Squirrel and she half-shut her eyes as if to narrow the angle of the conversation, then she looked over at the young lady, who had just been carried in, “Who is she?” she asked condescendingly.

Sandy replied in a low tone, as if protecting her, “She comes from the south side.”

Henry and Kim laughed at the way he reacted, but Sandy stood his ground and protected his friend. The handsome male model man looked away as if to shield the young lady, “She is a friend of mine, right - that’s all.”

When no one said anything Sandy, as if wishing to close the subject, repeated, “Look, she is a friend,” and he stared at the young artist beside him. Then after a second or two, he added as if understanding the reason why people are sceptical about each other, “Henry, I have got lots of friends, and there are all different - just like me.”

Maestros the club, had something on most nights, and when Henry, Sandy, and Kim got together they usually ended up there - even if they had planned to go home early that night. Just before they left Nico’s cafe bar, Sandy told Kim in an excited voice what had happened that afternoon, “Henry painted a huge blue A in the Brewery office. Then he sent them a letter saying that if they did not support art in the future, they would be a target for more art attacks.”

As Sandy screamed with laughter Kim looked at Henry as if to question his sanity. Then Kim asked in a quiet voice, “What did you do that for, Henry?”

Henry hardly gave it a second thought, and replied in an angry tone, “Because I’m sick of it: writing to big companies asking them to help me with my art, and I’m fed up being rejected - that’s why.”

Kim and Sandy had not heard this desperate tone of voice before, from their friend, and they both looked at each other as if confirming the existence of the devil in a friend. However, they did not say anything more on the subject, in case it offended their friend the young artist Henry Bowers.

Presently, Kim bought everyone a drink, and what had been said, a few moments ago, was momentarily forgotten about like a bad dream. When the cafe bar shut at midnight all the new wave people streamed out onto the famous Glasgow street, and

everyone for a time seemed to mill around outside the cafe bar wondering where to go. Standing in this little crowd, Henry thought the majority of faces looked lost, as if the next port of call was still to be determined in the centre of their imagination. It was just like when you hear someone call to you in a dream, but you're not sure where the voice is coming from, and where you should go to.

After speaking to a local drummer, who said that he too was going up to Maestros, they all walked up towards Scott Street. The three Art-lovers under an early summer night sky, that had one or two dark clouds hovering here and there like big lost black balloons, all looked up and wondered if the sky would break and rain would fall, before they got inside the famous nightclub. Kim, feeling the connection of earth and sky, started to quietly sing a song on the topic, by The Tourists, then halfway through the chorus she lamented about how the band had broken up last year.

Sandy did not think much about the strange sky, but having heard the forecast he wondered if he would get home dry tonight. This made Kim ask him, "Where are you staying, these days, Squirrel?"

Sandy, as if to kill the topic, replied sharply, "Never you mind, darling."

Kim looked at Henry, as if to say, "Outrageous - don't you think?" Then she laughed and beautiful lips once more mocked the male model, before they started singing again, "Come on tell me, Squirrel, where are you staying?"

When they got across the road, Henry told them to wait a minute outside the art gallery, The Third Eye Centre. Henry looked inside at some of the avant-garde pictures. Then the young artist took out a spray can, from inside his jacket pocket, and immediately he started spray painting the large window on the main street with art axioms. Kim looked on in amazement and, after a few moments, she said anxiously, "Henry Bowers what are you doing?"

Henry looked round from spray painting, and he gazed at her as if life for the artist had no meaning, back to front, beginning to end. It didn't take Henry long to spray the words:

ART HAS NO FEAR

ART HAS NO FAVOUR

When he had finished spray painting the young artist stood back and looked at it, "Yes, that looks quite good," he said and smiled to himself.

Sandy whooped and through the laughter, he shouted, "The men in the white coats will come for you, Henry Bowers, and lock you up."

Kim's head slowly turned away from the artist's face and, as her eyes wandered down to the bottom end of Sauchiehall Street, towards Charing Cross, she seemed to fix herself to the dark night-time clouds, straying towards another realm. Kim gazed for a while at the lost image, and as she stared she seemed to drift with the clouds into a mad uncertain world. Trying to work out what in the world would become of the smartly dressed figure in front of her, she suddenly sighed, "Oh, Henry."

Sandy, as soon as he got to the bar in Maestros, asked the manager about a vacancy in the company. He had heard that the same company was looking for a manager for their club in Edinburgh. Apparently, the male model had phoned that day and applied for it. A minute or two later, as the future danced in his mind, Sandy turned to Henry and said, "I think I've got it."

Kim thought it best to be mum and warn him: "Don't count your chickens before their hatched, Sandy Squirrel."

Of course, she laughed after saying it, but having said it she knew a serious point had been made. Not long after this a fun atmosphere came over the Art-lovers, and once again they started drinking and chatting. Kim spoke about the first time she had met her Art-loving friends; she remembered how she had given the name the Art-lovers to them. And to emphasise the point she was trying to make, she opened her big brown eyes as wide as possible just to show her friends what she meant. Making her eyes reflect the past she said, "That was the night, I got drunk and Sandy

carried me all the way home on his back,” then she opened her mouth again, and although her voice made no sound she imitated a laugh.

David the DJ took a break from playing the records and came over to the bar and stood with his friends for a few moments. Desperate to forget the pressure that comes upon someone who makes others enjoy themselves, the DJ relaxed in his usual way by saying to Henry, “Give us a fag, Henry,” then he looked around at the nightclub faces. The DJ for a moment turned towards Kim and, after a cool puff on his cigarette, he said cheekily, “So, Kim, the Wonder Kid, how does it feel to be out with Glasgow’s number one artist, then?”

The cool-headed young lady replied, “Interesting,” and as she looked over in the direction of the half-filled dance floor, Kim brought her chin up to hide a grin. Then she laughed again, and added, “Very interesting.”

Sandy, by this time high as a kite because of the move to Edinburgh, told David the DJ what the artist had been up to. The male model screamed, “He’s been spray painting offices and windows with art axioms!”

DJ David liked this and said, “The next time you feel one of your art attacks, coming on, Bow Wow, give me a shout, and I’ll come along.”

Henry bought some drinks, and presently David the DJ went back to spinning the magical world of sound into a wondrous fantastic night, with a track from the Human League. The young artist liked the song and he danced with Kim, and as the chorus faded only to come back again, the two Art-lovers danced their new wave dance, going towards one another, and sometimes going away from each other. And when the lights were not blinding them, the two Art-lovers gazed into each other's eyes. Somewhere outside the rhythm of the song, in-between dance movements, they became unbelievable and timeless, just like all the other young people all over the world at that moment.

It was so easy to dream out way passed the flashing lights of the nightclub, and into a land of complete happiness, where sex

and love seemed to fuse together into an ageless harmony. And when they kissed Henry could only hear a faint sound around him, sometimes a word came from the dance floor, as if from heaven or hell, and it seemed to push him deeper into the spell, that was somehow part of the fashion of the time they lived in. Kim, as she stood with her back against one of the long glass mirrors, could feel her whole body against his beating heart: man woman, woman man love. As if to guide them to where they were going and back to where they had come from, the value of love and the hope of love filled up in their eyes.

Henry took Kim's hand, and knowing that for some reason their destiny to be apart they walked back to the bar. They would always be friends who could kiss on dance floors, and meet for coffee and drinks; but love the great force in all things somehow showed the two of them that it could never be.

Kim sighed at her own romantic thoughts, and as she looked at some of the nightclub faces, who were standing on the stairs, she pulled a face, and before putting a foot on the first step, that led back up towards the bar, she sighed, "It's not easy being involved with someone else, and remembering the past with you, Henry Bowers." Then she looked at him long and hard, as if to justify her flowery words, "You know it's not."

Henry gazed at her and, as they both walked up the short flight of stairs towards the bar, a curious thought drifted into the head of the young artist and it made him smile. Just for a moment, he thought he understood the reason why their relationship had ended, and just to annoy her Henry said, "Now you'll have me telling you again, Kim, that it's all your fault because you're in love with the modern world and not me."

The young artist had never been so close to someone before, who had been so close to someone else, and he knew if it were not for the grace of God he would have been mixed up to the point of despair. Henry cursed and blamed modern living with its lack of understanding, and its fascination for what he called supermarket love. It all seemed a great game where you just take what you want, then disappear into the night. However, instead of being

happy he could see people were sad: 'I'm not happy with my relationship at the moment. It will probably last till the end of the month - but after that I'll have to go shopping again,' is what people said to him. At the bar, Henry looked about him and he laughed when he came to the conclusion, "I guess that's why so many people don't get married, so that they can go shopping every day."

Henry Bowers watched Kim pick up her drink from the bar, then the young artist turned towards an odd couple next to him, and his artistic thoughts told him, "Yes, love, the great adventure, in nineteen hundred and eighty one has been turned into a crash course on how to avoid being hurt."

If he thought about it - which he didn't really all that much - the young artist felt that modern society, controlled people by fashion politics. The successful man and the successful woman must act in a certain way: be cool, feel for no one, have no convictions, no religion, and no beliefs. The formula to follow he felt went something like this: every morning take grapefruit, before cereal, and exercise by jogging every day. Don't call your lover until they are on their knees. Buy a house, then rent it out. Don't get married, just live with someone. Don't love your neighbour. Don't worry about poverty anywhere in the world. Make lots of money. Life is not your problem. Greed is good. Greed is gold. Eat die, be chic and on your own - don't you know darling this is nineteen hundred and eighty-one.

Of course, Henry knew that no one can get out of their bed in the morning without having some sort of feelings, but life for the young artist in the early eighties had become so mixed up, so trans-avant-garde: dead. In fact, the new right wing business man, and business woman, were the only people who looked as if they could take the new government's medicine and forget about the consequences.

Sandy suddenly appeared and took Kim away to dance, and although he did not finalise things in his mind, the young artist felt that the whole scene was changing - just like it was in front of his eyes down on the dance floor. The young artist standing alone at

the bar for some reason felt very much divorced from the ordinary man and woman in society.

Although the ice in spring had disappeared, that had followed a heatwave, the outlook for May was cold, damp, miserable and wet. Henry on the first day of the month got up around ten o'clock; as he walked from the bedroom to the bathroom he picked up the morning mail. After a lazy yawn, the young artist complained to himself, "Jobs that I went for three months ago, and here they are only getting back to me now. Why are so many people out of work? They should hire more people to process the application forms - that's what they should do. Society for some reason has lost its conscience about the right to work."

Dear Mr Bowers,

With reference to your recent application for the above post. I regret to inform you...

The young artist crumpled up the first letter, then he kicked it into the bin by the kitchen-come-studio door. The next letter he noticed had a frank mark on it from the City Chambers, Glasgow, and it came as no real surprise to him when he read:

Dear Mr Bowers,

I regret to inform you that your application for financial assistance for your painting exhibition Fashion Squares, was unsuccessful at the meeting of Arts and Culture Committee. Please come along and pick up your painting, The Author, that you submitted, to the Performing Arts Department.

Henry looked across at the space in the hallway where the painting had been taken from, and he sighed, “Ah well, The Author will soon be back in his usual room.”

The young artist had felt so good, as well, when he had handed the painting over to the spotty faced girl two weeks ago inside the City Chambers.

Around two pm that day the young artist walked over to George Square, and went up to the Performing Arts Department. When he reached the second floor the spotty-faced girl who worked there stopped what she was doing. She watched the young artist open the door, then she went to meet him. Henry as he stared at her could see in her face no reflection, or understanding, or real concern about the struggling artist, or where he was going in life. Henry did not hide his feelings, he mumbled something to her about the letter, and after she had said to him, “Not to worry,” she went away and got the painting for him.

Just before he left the office, Henry asked her, “What did the committee say?”

The spotty face girl looked a little embarrassed; however, after a long stare that indicated uncertainty, she spoke, “They feel you have to develop a little more.”

Henry coughed as if to cover a laugh, and after looking into her sad dull eyes, the young artist fixed his stare on a metal wastepaper basket beside her desk. Hardly thinking about it, the young artist kicked the bin halfway up the office. Then he looked up at the grand ceiling above him. The eight or nine workers in the big office all looked round at once, and Henry felt wonderful. With a beautiful smile the young artist said to the spotty-faced girl, “How do you develop when you can’t get help from state organisations,” and hearing no answer Henry Bowers left the building.

At times like this the young artist despaired, and he would have given up the ghost, if his dreams had not kept him going. To survive in this dreadful time he never let go of his dreams - he never at anytime allowed the uncaring world to get to him. When things got bad the young artist just let his mind drift away, and he soon found himself in another world: a magical place where wonderful things always happen. He called it his glass world. Henry felt that everyone had their own glass world to go to in times of trouble. A place where people are friendly and kind, where people dance and love each other, where paintings tell the story of this world, and the one to come. He knew that once inside this glass world of the imagination he was safe and sound.

The young artist, as he daydreamed, searched for clues about how to survive in the horrible world around him: love was always the answer to everything, he knew that, no matter the subject or situation. Henry sometimes sang a few lines to himself of a song he had made up about this glass world: "Glass world you never let me down. You're always safe and always sound."

Feeling a whole lot better the young artist walked through George Square, and soon found himself wandering towards his favourite cafe bar: Nico's. Henry said to himself, "I'll buy a glass of red wine to cheer myself up - that's what I'll do," and as he walked on, he sang the words again to himself of the song he had made up, and smiled at one or two strangers as they went by him.

When he eventually got home later on that night he did not feel like working on any of his paintings. Henry lay on the sofa and listened to some classical music. The symphony music seemed to take him back to another time, into another wonderful glass world somewhere. Henry kicked off his soft plain dark blue shoes, and quite tired now, he whispered the words to himself, "Yes, just let me go. Let me drift away into a long deep sleep. Let me meet people who are loving, kind and free, and where me the artist can paint them, till an angel comes and tells me it's time to go back to the mundane world again..."

Henry must have slept for about six hours; for when he awoke it was pitch black outside. When he lifted his head slowly up from

the crumpled cushion on the settee, he could hardly see a thing around him. Presently, he got up and stretched himself. He then walked over to the large window and looked down onto the famous street below. The young artist yawned; he felt everything heavy around him, everything in the world at that moment seemed to him to be black like soot. As he switched on the light, just by the left-hand curtain, he looked over at the clock on the mantelpiece above the gas fire. He murmured something to himself, "It's two in the morning, I must have slept for ages." Henry stretched again and as he did so he yawned, "I feel another art attack coming on, I do. Yes, tonight, I will slip out and paint the City Chambers with some art axioms, and get my own back on the horrible people who work there."

A few moments later a strange thought crossed his mind; for as he closed the flat door, Henry wondered how Luther must have felt before going off to nail his famous thoughts to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, on 31 October 1571. As usual, when he got down the stairs he stood for a moment at the close entrance. The young artist looked left, then right, along Sauchiehall Street. Suddenly, he was filled with awe: "While I was far away in dreamland it must have rained, for everything now looks shiny, black and new again. It looks absolutely wonderful."

Henry wondered about the beauty of rain and how like the sun it runs here and there and brings new life to an old matter-of-fact world. Even though everywhere was shut at this time of night on the famous street, the city looked really grand. And as the young artist meandered along the street, he whistled to himself and somehow the dark night gave itself up, and revealed its innermost secrets to him. However, the young artist knew that the night held many more attractions than he could ever understand. He reminded himself: "So many strange things happen at night: murder, threats between lovers, a good man made bad by a devil that never sleeps."

He turned off Sauchiehall Street and walked along towards the grand building at George Square. The bright lights, now shining everywhere onto the main street, from the city centre

shops made everything unreal. As he walked on the young artist marvelled once again at the nocturnal world, and how it sparkled clean all around him. When he looked up at the tall buildings on both sides of Buchanan Street, he blinked. And as the rain fell on his face it made circles around his eyes. Henry knew that although the city appeared to be brand new, in the days to come it would look hard, dirty, and corruption would once again be part of its fabric.

About fifteen minutes later at the corner of Buchanan Street and St Vincent Street, in the small hours of the morning, Henry opened a glass door of a cold telephone box, and once inside the young artist dialled a well-known number. As he waited for someone to answer the phone, he noticed one or two queer folk hanging around the toilet area, not far from the phone box. After a second or two he got through. The number belonged to a national newspaper. In fact, they had their office not all that faraway from where he was standing.

In a quiet voice, Henry left the following message with a sleepy night clerk who manned the news desk to the early hours of the morning: "This is a message from an Art-lover, out late in the city. I have just sprayed painted the front of the City Chambers with art axioms. This action was carried out in response to the City Chambers lack of interest in art. Please send a reporter and a photographer round in the morning."

"What's that mate?" said a startled voice, on the other end of the telephone.

All the way home that night the young artist, Henry Bowers, thought up new art axioms to write on walls:

ART WILL MAKE YOUR EYES WONDER
ART IS SLOW TO ROUSE BUT QUICK TO ANGER
ART WILL KILL THE DEAD MAN IN YOU

Henry didn't know where these phrases came from. The young artist sometimes felt that the world went round just so that people could see and hear all the same things from different points of view: invent, rise, fall, destroy, thesis, antithesis, synthesis, and so it goes on. But the unknown factor that makes humans react, in

the way they do to certain events, was still a mystery to him: "All I can do is see signs of progression in art, and faithfully follow it till it fades." he thought to himself, "The idea maybe political, social, scientific or even sexual, it doesn't matter - I will follow art till I die."

Up a little further, Henry put out his hand and he felt the light rain fall on it and, when he looked up at the tall buildings in the city centre, he blinked and the rain once again made crazy circles around his eyes. Henry blinked several times just for fun, then he drifted away and wondered what life would be like in the future: "Things will probably go along slowly, but I reckon just after the year 2000 there will be a huge cultural change. The shift will be so great that a break from the past will happen in the first decade of the new millennium. The people will crave for something novel just to take them away from the modern nightmare. I think the change will be so great that the clothes we are standing in today will look old and out of date, as if they came from another world. I believe that people in this country will soon be like battery hens staring into computers; spontaneity will be banned in all walks of life. The human will be reduced to functions: work and play. TV and radio will be seen as the only window to God. The real world will be made to look unfriendly and malevolent by the rich people who believe in money. However, I will try and help the good people. I hope that when people look at one of my paintings they will be transported to another realm. This tangled up technological world will make young men old before their prime. Yes, let's hope that this unromantic technological age that is upon us is put to the sword by a new generation. Yes, let's hope that when the new generation comes along, after the enterprise culture, they will give everyone a job who is willing to work, and everyone a chance in life to succeed. Yes, death to the old corrupt entrepreneur, death to the new criminal enterprising culture that is upon us."

In the centre of Sauchiehall Street, Henry Bowers stopped and wrote some more art words on a wall outside the new Savoy shopping centre:

ART WILL NEVER DIE AS LONG AS HUMANS ARE ALIVE

Then the young idealist philosopher in the small hours of the morning walked along the famous street, and when he got to the cinema he crossed the road. Henry stopped outside the close entrance and looked back down Sauchiehall Street, towards the city centre, then he went up the stairs and straight into his kitchen-come-studio. There he looked at the round old-fashioned face of the wall clock that Sandy Squirrel had bought for him. The clock told him that it was half-past three in the morning. The young artist, still full of energy, destiny and fate, did not feel like sleeping. Henry picked up a paintbrush and started to paint.

“While the world on one side sleeps, I will go to work, and by the grace of the Good Lord, I will paint a picture tonight, in lines and colours, that will capture the time I am living in, for people born, and people unborn to look at.”

Halfway through the painting, he put down his brush, and he picked up a pen that was lying not far away from him. After a few moments, Henry wrote down a poem. And as he read it back to himself, he couldn't help but wonder once again about the words he had written, and about the paint on the canvas next to him.

Paint to brush
Brush to idea
Line to colour
Colour to scene
Force to follow
Frame to fact
Look at this
Look at that
Canvas, wood
Metal or steel
Makes me wonder
What is real?

The following morning as soon as the young artist opened his eyes he watched the glorious sunlight stream into his bedroom from the back of his flat. He got up like a shot and ran through to his studio. Henry stood there for a moment and looked around the room. The light was so beautiful; it seemed to pour hope and glory over everything it kissed. Even though the room was in a complete mess everything just seemed amazing. The paintings in the room all came alive; it was as if a wondrous glaze had been poured over them during the night. The miracle in the sun somehow made everything new, bright and wonderful again, and all perfection and imperfection inside and outside of man it seemed to hide from him.

The young artist in a moment of pure joy thought about the light, and how it promises eternal life for everyone who believes in a cross, a kingdom, and a Christ. The young artist cried out, "The light is full of hope and glory," then he repeated, "I must go to work. I must go to work."

After Henry had washed, he threw the towel over his shoulder and told himself, "It's a terrific life being an artist!"

It didn't seem all that long till the sun went above the building where he lived, and Henry Bowers put down his brush and looked

at the painting titled: The Blue Bar Jug. As the young artist stared at it he wondered if more bottles were needed to create an illusion behind the jug. He mused to himself as he stared, "They say shapes and colours are everything when leading an eye forward to look at something."

When the painting was finished Henry liked it and, with a smile on his face, he sang, "Painting, painting on the wall who will look at you when I have gone?" then he picked up his brush, and put H.B. in the corner, next to the beer glass? "Now it belongs to me, he joked."

Henry's mind then went back to last night's thoughts, regarding art in time, and something in the early summer sun reminded him of what he was trying to do: "I believe an artist should put the feeling of his own time into his paintings; for I am sure the painted image will transfer wonder thoughts to whoever looks at it in the future: for it will be still in the present time, then."

Henry stood up and as he cleaned his brushes in the kitchen sink he marvelled to himself, "I guess everyone has the same chance when they become an artist: for life is simply about art for the artist."

A few moments later, the young artist stretched himself out in front of the canvas he was working on and, even though he had hardly slept last night, he felt wonderful. He cried out, "Praise the Lord, It's good to be alive!"

Presently, he changed out of his painting clothes, that he had fallen asleep in last night. And when he was ready, Henry fell on his knees and said the Lord's Prayer. The young artist, not long after this, looked down onto Sauchiehall Street, and he wondered what in the world lay out there for him today. When he came back into the kitchen Henry whistled the chorus along with the popular song, Vienna, that was being played on the radio. Then the young artist looked down at the front page of an evening paper. The edition was about three weeks old. He had put it down on top of the dining table to save the table from getting covered in white spirit, and all the other solvents he used for thinning and cleaning. Henry recorded the date in his mind: April the nineteenth, ninety

hundred and eighty-one. Then he read about strikes, peace envoys, and that new wonder phenomenon that was sweeping the country: Thatcherism.

Henry laughed when he thought to himself: “Does anyone really care about who will buy this or that state owned company, as far as I can see all they are going to do is fill the marketplace with sly and untrustworthy people. And in the slow dramatic change of culture the common man will lose his shares, that half of them never knew they had, and meanwhile the Labour party are going around looking like old men who have no dreams, or visions, left in their eyes - what a sham.”

Knowing that it is the duty of every capitalist swine to take as much as he can from whoever he can, Henry cheered himself up with a joke, “Yes, everyone will soon be part of a fantastic enterprise culture; they will soon be driving around in their own company cars. Can you imagine it, red will turn blue here in Scotland, and soon all you will hear is: ‘I own this. I have shares in that. I am a successful business man. I am a successful business woman.’ ”

Henry Bowers did not really see himself as an art anarchist: “No, I believe in art, and the great man who produces it. And since none of the major parties have ever mentioned anything about art during any election campaign, that I have ever heard of in my lifetime, from now on I am going to abstain from even thinking about party politics - that’s what I’m going to do.”

For lunch Henry had a bowl of chicken soup, some honey with bread, and a cup of tea. The young artist, as he sat there at the table in the kitchen-come-studio, read a book about Roman sculpture. And when he came across a picture of the Arch of Constantine AD 315, he thought it wonderful, and his mind seemed to drift back into another time. He saw Roman culture as a continuation of Greek culture, and that the artists who had lived then had a time zone to fill, just like they had now.

Henry had run out of cigarettes so just after one o’clock, he popped out to the Pakistani shop not far along the road from his flat. He noticed inside the small shop on Sauchiehall Street that

the young Pakistani boy behind the counter looked worried. Just then the boy spoke to a customer, an elderly woman, about the important events in the economy, and of course about the sensational news about the Pope being shot. Turning towards the young artist, the young Pakistani boy said, "Maggie will fight sir. She will break the unions. She is a shopkeeper just like me."

The elderly woman had lived long enough to understand events in time and space, near and far. In the local vernacular she lamented, "Oh, it will all work out son, don't you worry."

Henry smiled at the lad, then he glanced at the front cover of the morning paper and took in the latest events. And as he handed the boy some money for the cigarettes and the paper, he said, "Yea, it's a funny world all right: someone has shot the Pope, rail chaos, glue-sniffers, boob tubes, sunbeds, Rubik's cubes, and everyone is on the dole."

The young Pakistani boy looked up and laughed. Then he smiled as if he understood what the young artist was on about. As Henry walked back to his flat, he searched the newspaper, back to front, front to back, for the story that he had telephoned to the national newspaper office last night. The first time he went through the paper he could not find it; however the second time he went through it he found a small article under the heading, Local News, on page five: *During the night a group calling themselves the Art-lovers spray painted the City Chambers with art axioms.* The art slogans were not printed in the morning paper, and this annoyed the young artist Henry Bowers.

Later on that day in the afternoon a modern trailer, advertising the Scottish National Party, parked across the road from the artist's flat. When Henry looked out of the window he stared at it for a time, and thought it looked funny. He could see there was no one in the cab. The driver, as far as the young artist could make out, had gone for a walk around the shops. Even though there were a lot of people walking about the city centre, the artist felt they would all be too preoccupied with their own thoughts to bother about someone spray painting an advertising van with art slogans, "It will only take a few moments for me to

transfer my thoughts to words and then spray them onto the large white advertising sign,” his mind mumbled.

The young artist quickly grabbed a spray can from the cupboard beside the kitchen door, and he was out of the door in no time at all. Sauchiehall Street seemed quite busy when he opened the close door. Henry looked up and down the famous street to see if any faces fitted the face of the driver, and when none did, the young artist walked across the busy road and up to the side of the van that was parked right outside the cinema. Henry just below where it said ‘Independence,’ sprayed painted:

THE ONLY THING INDEPENDENT IN LIFE IS ART
AND A VOTE FOR ART IS A VOTE FOR LIFE

One or two people looked over at him, but thankfully no one said anything. Before crossing the road Henry sprayed the Art-lovers sign with the familiar ‘t’ like a cross before the hyphen, at the bottom of the poster - just to let everyone know who had done it.

About ten minutes later a bald man around fifty, who had a large stomach, blue jeans, and a black and white tee shirt on, appeared through the busy lunchtime shoppers. Henry thought the face of Gary Numan on his tee shirt looked funny around his big belly. Thankfully, the driver did not notice the art axioms spray painted on the side of his truck. And to the delight of the young artist - who was standing behind a curtain across the road - the driver climbed right into his cab. And after a few moments, the man drove the trailer round the city centre, telling everyone to vote for the Art Party: for it is the only independent thing left in life.

As Henry watched it go down Sauchiehall Street the artist wondered, “I hope people will reflect upon that before they put their crosses on the ballot paper the next time they vote.”

Kim, later that night, telephoned at half-past six, “Henry, dear, Richard is going to a band practice tonight, fancy getting together for a drink in Nico’s this evening?”

To make conversation Henry asked if she thought there would be a special feeling about tonight because the Pope had

been shot: "I wonder if he will be coming to Glasgow next year, after all?" he added in a calm voice.

Kim replied sharply, "Oh, Henry, really," then suddenly it seemed to penetrate her, and nearing the end of the conversation she admitted in a quiet voice, "I know it's unbelievable isn't it, if he comes they'll go daft."

Henry thought she sounded just like his mother, and would have said so, but the fear of putting two special people together in one conversation stopped him.

Just before signing off Kim said, "I will be bringing Richard to Maestros at the weekend," and she paused for pure effect.

When the young artist walked away from the telephone, Henry laughed, "That's Kim, all right, she always likes to keep things interesting."

Before going out, Henry sketched a portrait of his face in the bathroom mirror, and as he stared at it he couldn't help but wonder about the changing face of man in a crazy mixed up world in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-one: "A human face gives a spiritual reflection of who we are, then a feeling of what we are, and then some understanding of our relationship with the world - yes, very profound Henry." Then the young artist wondered what time it was, "You had better hurry up you don't want to keep your sophisticated post punk friend waiting - now do you."

The young artist put on a soft hat, then picked up his keys; however, suddenly the telephone rang. Henry lifted it up and said, "Hello."

There was a pause, then a public schoolboy voice said: "Hello, Henry, darling. How are you?"

Henry tilted his head to the side of the phone so that it would not upset the position of his soft hat. Then he spoke to his friend: "Yea, not bad Squirrel."

The young artist, when Sandy spoke, glanced down at the sketch of his face that he had placed just beside the phone, and something told him that his face was a third of its way through its journey, and in its prime. Henry signed off by saying, "Right

Squirrel, I'm coming, I'll see you in about five minutes," then he put the phone down.

It was a mild night outside and as Henry Bowers walked down Sauchiehall Street, in a casual suit, the beautiful early summer night sky filled his young heart with ageless hope and wonder. From the sky above imaginary aspirations from a million stars and a million galaxies came at him from all over the universe. The world seemed to be calling him on: "Seek and ye shall find," cried his young heart.

The young artist, as he walked into the cafe bar, felt all the faces reflect the same expectation of life, and this love of life and of being young made him feel wonderful, and unique. He felt free. Henry wanted life to stop right at that moment so that he could look at it; he wanted to keep it in his memory forever. Right at the end of the busy cafe bar, under the soft orange and yellow lights, Henry could see a DJ, a punky looking woman, and a male model man. Sandy as usual stood on tiptoes and waved a friendly hand at him, "Yoo-hoo! Henry, darling! We are over here!"

When Henry got there, David the DJ shook hands with him first, and then Sandy Squirrel laughed at the ordinary everyday outrageous scene, "You are looking marvellous, Henry, marvellous..."

David the DJ had read in the morning paper about the art attack on the City Chambers building during the night, and he said right away, "Nice one Henry."

Sandy screamed, and said, "You have been at it for at least two weeks now, and they still haven't caught you."

Henry bought everyone a drink, and as he handed them round he told his Art-loving friends all about the attack on the political poster on the advertising van: "And when I got back to the flat I watched the fat van driver trail around the city telling everyone to vote for the Art Party."

Kim, in a flirtatious shy way, said, "I saw that van today, outside Boots the Chemist."

Nico's on a Thursday night could get really busy. However, at the moment there were only about fifty or so people in the cafe

bar, and Henry suggested that they grab a table opposite the bar. Kim sat next to Henry and after a few minutes of outrageous Sandy Squirrel talk, she whispered to Henry, “Any news about your exhibition: Fashion Squares.”

That very morning Henry had received a letter from Wendy Jones, Scottish Arts Council, Edinburgh. He had asked the Council to help him with the cost of his next exhibition: Fashion Squares. The young artist had met her once and thought her academic. He thought she knew how to avoid contact with another person’s soul, and was clever at putting up so called regulations to stop herself acting independently.

Full of excitement Kim went on, “So what did the letter say, then?”

“They told me to get lost.”

Henry remembered most of the letter verbatim and, after he had put his drink down on the table, he read it out loud to his Art-loving friends as if he had it right there in front of him: “With regard to unemployed artists the Scottish Arts Council advises artists to inform the Social Security Office.”

It was well-known in the west coast of Scotland that the cognoscenti in Edinburgh had no time for the other side of the country. They would employ people from the other side of the country, but they had to toe the line. Apparently, all the government money went straight into their coffers, and they funded groups that they liked. The individual had to appeal to a committee, where more often than not vested interests were at stake. In short, if you were not in the wine bars in the capital, at the right time, kissing someone’s ass, then you had no chance of getting any help. The ordinary everyday people in Glasgow hated the elite in Edinburgh. Like Maupassant, the young artist was: “Without bias, without preconceived opinions, without academic ideas with no allegiance whatsoever to any artistic group.”

Kim, feeling for her out of work artist friend, cried out, “That’s terrible!”

David the DJ suggested action as the remedy, “Let’s jump through to the capital on the next train, and spray paint the Arts

Council's office - that will teach them not to be smart, and mess with the Art-lovers from Glasgow."

It was a crazy idea, but everyone seemed to agree. The Art-lovers finished their drinks, and in no time at all they found themselves up at Henry's flat stuffing spray cans into their jacket pockets. Sandy Squirrel, on the train to Edinburgh, could not sit at peace, and only a stern warning from David the DJ kept him quiet: "We will throw you off at Falkirk, Squirrel, if you don't sit down!"

The male model ignored him and looked at a young man's face on the opposite side of the carriage. Presently, he smiled at him as if he knew him. Then he looked back at his Art-loving friends, and said in a voice tinged with anger, "Oh, what are you lot like."

Henry had been to Edinburgh many times before, and he liked the city. The young artist, just before the train reached the capital, suggested in a light-hearted manner, "Let's visit some of the bars just off Rose Street and see the strippers."

Kim laughed and sighed, "Well, I don't mind as long as we can visit a bar where men dance and take their clothes off, as well."

David the DJ stood up and pulled apart the strange little square window on his left-hand side of the train and, as the air came rushing in he looked at Henry. Then he commented sarcastically, "You'll need to go back to Glasgow if you want to see that."

The pub they went to, in Rose Street, unfortunately had no strippers - only a wild looking DJ, who looked a bit like a white Stevie Wonder. The DJ, towards the end of every record, shouted to the punters, "Well folks,, can you handle it," and then he would play another record.

David the DJ thought it a whole lot of nonsense, and did not like the clientele and, as the DJ from Glasgow glanced round at the faces inside the bar, he reported coldly, "This place is full of public schoolboys and their boring birds. Let's get out of here."

Sandy on the other hand thought it not too bad and, as he looked at some of the people inside the bar, he said in a deep masculine voice, "If I get that job through here, I'll soon get them going," then he screamed a wild scream as if to warn the city he was on his way.

The Art-lovers from Glasgow eventually all sat down around a table opposite the bar, and they soon found themselves forgetting all about what they had come through to the capital for. Henry started chatting to David about the fast approaching weekend, and what he thought he would be up to. However, after a few minutes the young artist reminded them, "Listen we don't have all that much time to get to the other end of Princess Street, and spray the Arts Council building with our art axioms. We must get back to the station before midnight and catch the last train back to Glasgow."

When he had finished half his pint of lager Henry looked at the Roman symbols on Sandy Squirrel's watch face. The young artist, reflecting upon the scene, said, "Right, Art-lovers, here's the plan. We will hit the Arts Council building first, spray it with whatever thoughts come into our heads, then we shall return to the main street and go down to the government building - which is not all that far away from the station - and spray paint our art thoughts over it in protest at how our brothers and sisters are being treated on the dole."

Sandy screamed, and called the young artist, "Hosea Bowers!" then he cried, "Your like a left wing insurrectionist who wants to bring down the system!"

Seeing the need to inject some realism, the young artist quickly added in a haughty tone, "Do your best Art-lovers, for the future of British culture - *nae* the world - may lie in these spray cans."

Inside the pub Henry passed around some extra spray cans that he had brought in a bag with him. The young artist, with a feeling deep inside him of the right to protest against the uncaring modern ways of society, held up his pint tumbler and gave a toast, "Here's to a good art attack!"

Not long after this, the Art-lovers from Glasgow all fired out of the Edinburgh pub in Rose Street, and headed towards their first target. On the other side of the city, standing outside a terraced row of houses under a dark early summer sky, Henry felt the temperature suddenly drop; it was certainly not summertime yet. He knew that when the light faded at this time of the year it got chilly quickly. The young artist, however, feeling neither warm nor cold, because of all the excitement, searched for the Arts Council building along the dark terraced row. When he spotted their plaque on the wall, halfway down the street, the young artist wasted no time; he ran up to it, and started to spray:

ART SQUANDERERS

ART AGAINST THE DEVIL

Then he drew a line from the door of the building to the gutter, and painted pound signs all the way down to the black square drain, at the side of the kerb. As Sandy Squirrel kept watch he muttered to himself, “Unbelievable, outrageous, there all out of their boxes - they will get caught.”

It was well-known among artists, at this time, that the people inside the dark building, not far from Haymarket station, had lost touch with reality. The Scottish Arts Council had become elitist. They did not have anytime for struggling artists like Mr Henry Bowers, and Henry knew that only direct action would change things, in short:

ART RETRIBUTION

As he sprayed his thoughts he wondered what the employees of that company would think when they read the writing on the wall the next day. Henry mimicked one or two of their voices: “Oh, my goodness what has been happening - another art attack. Have you seen what’s on the wall out there?”

On the road outside the Arts Council building, Henry sprayed the window of a big fancy car:

YOU LOVE CARS, YOU LOVE WEALTH

BUT YOU HATE YOURSELVES

Henry laughed when he stood back and looked at the words, and just when everything seemed to be going well Sandy Squirrel

spotted a blue flashing light way out in the distance. In a funny deep voice, he shouted to the others, “Quick run for it - it’s the police!” and got off his mark.

Everyone stopped what they were doing and ran back towards Princess Street, and quickly mixed in with the multitude of late night faces, who were thronging the streets. And so undercover of the night, under a dark blue ocean sky that had just produced the first stars of the evening, the Glasgow Art-lovers headed towards their next target. Even though the main street was packed it didn’t take long for the Glasgow Art-lovers to reach the Scottish Office. When they got there Kim stared at the huge imposing dark grey building as if to understand its meaning in time and space, and the ways of the workers who go inside there every day. The young artist put his hand on her shoulder, and said in a comic voice, “Paint never hurt anyone. Go forth young Art-lover and spray your thoughts.”

David the DJ standing not that faraway added, “Yea, let’s wake up the world with a few more artistic thoughts,” and as he laughed, he sprayed on the wall the words:

WORKERS FOR ART’S SAKE WAKE UP

In a doorway underneath an arch, Henry Bowers, the young artist sprayed the words:

ART REALITY LIGHT

The last train to Glasgow seemed to be packed full with lonely and tired travellers who did not want to communicate much with each other; however right in the middle of the second carriage, on the left-hand side, sat four happy Art-lovers buoyant with life.

David the DJ famed, for keeping spirits high in nightclubs and bars, said to the others, “That was brilliant. I can just see the headlines tomorrow: Art attack on the capital!” and he laughed to himself.

Kim smiled as she remembered some of the images from the wild night. Then after watching the flickering car lights through the train window disappearing into the capital city, she said softly, “I think this night will be forever in our memories.”

Henry agreed and, full of *jeu d'esprit*, he said, "We shall keep on going till our art words break the pretensions of the old corrupt system."

Kim looked out of the right hand window again and, as the train steadily made its way back to Glasgow, sitting there opposite her, Henry Bowers noticed how different all his friends were from all the other people in the carriage. He thought to himself: "David with his long blonde hair and bomber jacket with little badges of guitars and album covers on it. And what about the punky new wave girl, who loves to say goodbye, with her bright red lips, beautiful brown eyes, and funny nose. And of course Sandy Squirrel - well what can you say about a man, who looks as if he has just fallen out of a nineteen twenties black and white movie, who screams and shouts about how completely outrageous and ridiculous people are in life."

Kim noticed Henry's eyes on her, and she smiled at him and gave him a look as if to say, "What are you thinking about then, Henry Bowers."

Then she said in her usual nonchalant way, "I think we should all go dancing tonight when we get back to Glasgow. What do you say?"

With everyone in agreement the Glasgow Art-lovers got off the train at Queen Street, and headed for the Rock Garden Bar, that was situated on the same street as the station. Once there they caught a last drink, before the bar closed, then once again they all headed up to Maestros to dance the night away.

That night when Henry got home in the early hours of the morning he didn't feel like going to bed so he worked through the night and painted a moonlight scene from his tenement window. When he had only the mysterious night-time shadows to put in, he put down his brush and found himself thinking about where he was going in life: "I will never hit my peak till I get back to the country. City life is so sophisticated and unreal. It makes people dull to the sense of change that is going on around them. I wish I could pack all my things away right now, sell the flat, and in the morning catch a bus and disappear."

The young artist's mind then travelled back to his innocent boyhood days that had been wild and free in the country and, as he stared at the print of Mont Ste-Victoire, by Cezanne, on his wall in the kitchen-come-studio, the young artist said to himself, "I know the fields between the towns of Busby and Eaglesham like the back of my hand. I know the air is clean there, and the wind whispers the truth to everyone who listens to it. I'll go back there one day, take my brushes and paints, and go to work."

Still thinking about the country fields near Eaglesham, the artist asked himself, "I wonder if Rudolf Hess had time to notice it before he was taken into solitude for the rest of his life: for it was there he landed. I wonder as he looked at the green fields, did he think to himself, 'This may very well be my last glimpse of freedom,' and as he waited for the Home Guard to arrive did he stare at the fields and see them as paintings never to be forgotten."

Was it a stray thought, or was it the thought of that Second World War leader - and what man can do to man - that made the young artist look out of the window of his tenement, down into the back courts of Sauchiehall Street, and stare into a nightmare world, full of corruption, greed and hate. Just then something made the young artist remember the writings of the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, who wrote that when the wind blows against you, you have to harden yourself against the world's ills, "Beat down life and make your mark Henry Bowers. Let nothing stand in your way," he heard his mind say as if he was part of a modern play.

The spirit world thankfully came back to the artist, and the negative feelings that had urged him to fall into the darkness faded away, "Paint your heart out, Henry Bowers, and the world will remember you."

After painting the city rooftops, the skyline, and the secret silver moonlight shadows, the young artist put down his brush and started thinking about how paintings should illuminate thoughts, and how ideas should move from one man to another: "Art awakens the dreamers up with new dreams. Vague shapes are only there to renew your interest in this world: for when the world of man is lost

in the big death scene - with no afterlife, and no reason to live or die - it is only the artist who can help him.”

Henry stayed awake till daybreak, and when the majestic morning sun came up to announce another day of life on planet earth, the young artist went through to the living room, and there he wrote out more art axioms on a piece of paper. Nonchalantly, he placed the words on a table by the window, cut them up, moved them around, then read them out loud:

ART IS A JUGGLER AS IT ATTRACTS

ART IS EQUAL AS IT MAKES ITS MARK

ART IS A CAPTURED THOUGHT MADE PLAIN

ART IS FOR EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO STAY
SANE

Henry, before going back to the painting of the night-time scene, closed his eyes, and he soon felt himself drifting faraway into the wonderful world of his imagination; and once there he stood at the bar inside Maestros nightclub and listened to the heartbeats of the new electronic music. And as the music went in and out of time, he talked and danced in the new way. Sometimes he went towards a young woman and then towards a kiss, and sometimes towards faces he knew. His friends were all there, dressed up in their new wave clothes. They would greet him and they would speak to each other in the language of the time. But like all good things the electric dream soon faded and, when he got up from his favourite chair in the living room, he looked down onto a hushed Sauchiehall Street, for a few minutes, then the young artist, Henry Bowers, went back into the kitchen-come-studio and started painting again.

Henry, as he sat down at his easel, said to himself, “As the world is getting up for work I will continue to put paint onto paint; my brush will go to and from the canvas and make stripes, vertical and horizontal, symbols and spheres. And when my thoughts turn to ideas, I will move the paint around with pure colour, pure instinct, and discover a style to match a time.”

About an hour later Henry changed boards and started working on another painting that he had half-finished last week.

His mother - who visited him once a week - had titled it: Balloons. The young artist, of course had put the word Art in front of the title, and dedicated it to the Scottish Arts Council who had turned their back on him.

When the young artist worked all through the night he always looked forward to something to eat in the morning, and if tiredness came upon him before nine o'clock, he would throw it off and would dream of an afternoon sleep, or a late beer at Nico's with his Art-loving friends, "Yes, life is all about planning things," he marvelled to himself. "When you're an artist you have got to go with the flow of energy given to you. Praise the Good Lord. Yes, an artist has got to work hard and forget all about the barriers that are in front of him, like: hunger, desire, and the grudging attitude of others. With love in his heart and respect for his fellow man the great artist will always win through. Yes, we have to build a better world for the children of tomorrow. Work on Henry Bowers."

When Henry Bowers had first met his friends a few years ago he had been fascinated by their free and easy lifestyle: David the DJ playing music in one of the top clubs in town, Kim hanging-out with art students, and working - when she liked - in a fashionable restaurant in the west end of the city, and Sandy the fabulous male model working for some model agency. At that time Henry, after leaving the newspaper office, could not find work. The world he reckoned had forgotten about him. So after a time he decided that he would live out the rest of his life in the wonderful world of art.

Henry trained himself how to approach every situation with the highest form of art. He trained himself how to walk, how to talk, how to sit, how to eat, what to wear, the way to act in front of strangers, the way to look at life full in the face without disturbing anyone, how to open a conversation, how to close a conversation: in short every situation in life had to be mirrored by the highest form of art known by man. From the day he left his job, Henry Bowers constantly reminded himself that to survive is not enough, “No, you must move through the world and conquer it. The blank page is waiting for lines to be written and drawn on it, and who else can do this - but the artist.”

Henry liked the image he had once heard preached from a pulpit, by an old minister, about how a pearl is constantly shaped by the sand, and how the word 'enthusiasm' was from a Greek word meaning to be God filled. Thinking about it more in depth the young artist felt: "Yes, nature guards and protects you from yourself, at the same time it pushes you out towards your fate. The path is already made and in place for you, but the invisible stepping stones cannot be jumped on till mother earth is ready for you. She gently leads you forward and whispers kind words in your ear: for man must be shaped first, so that one day, in time and space, he can see how straight the path to glory is."

Henry, sitting all alone in his flat, cleaned some brushes, and then he put out some charcoal and paper on top of the kitchen table. He knew Julie the model would be arriving in the afternoon, and all going well he would do some life drawings of her. Julie arrived at four o'clock. She worked in a pub at the far end of St Vincent Street called Midas. When the model arrived she walked straight into the kitchen-come-studio, and as usual immediately moaned about the type of customer she had to serve in the bar at night and during the day: "All they do is drink and talk about sex, 'And who's the lucky lad, then?' they say, and look at each other and laugh."

Henry smiled, but he did not look at her till she had got undressed and was standing naked with her back against the kitchen wall. Julie caressed her beautiful breasts in a familiar way to show the artist she was ready for him. Then she smiled. Henry first of all looked at the relationships of different parts of her body, and after a moment or two he felt the centre of attraction originate from somewhere down near her stomach. He lightly drew the pencil down from her head to her shoulder, and then to her stomach, and finally onto her thigh, and soon half a figure of Julie appeared on the cartridge paper. Above all things, between the lines and shadows and vague shapes, Henry wanted to capture the innocence of this young bar girl.

Julie stood there and looked at him and, every time the young artist stared at her beautiful body, she smiled. Suddenly, she said in a sweet voice, "Are you going to exhibit this drawing, Henry?"

The young artist touched the drawing with his finger and smudged an area of pubic hair into a V shape. Then he replied casually, "I'm thinking of doing an oil painting of it - best wait though and see how this turns out."

To change the subject, Henry asked after a chap who he knew went to the Midas Bar in St Vincent Street. Julie looked at the young artist and after she had thought about the man, she replied in a street fashion way, not unlike Sandy Squirrel, "Oh, him," then she laughed, and said as if in a dream, "I like his friend, though."

The young artist with a fixed stare looked at the drawing in front of him. Henry felt that the drawing had not come to life yet, and as he stared at it he tried to figure out why it had not fully revealed itself. However, after he looked at it a few more times, he thought about what he was going to say to the model. The young artist pressed his thumb and made a curve shape around her breast. Then he replied, "So you like his friend."

After a few drawings in charcoal and pencil, Henry had an idea. He asked Julie to sit on the floor with her legs crossed. He wanted to have the lamplight on her back. The young artist had in his mind a picture of a naked body relaxing, as the model looked at some paintings against the studio wall. The sketch turned out quite good, and Henry thought it would make a good painting. Whistling a dance tune something about *Love's Unkind*, the young artist placed the drawings he had made that afternoon on the kitchen table. He hoped that their presence there would remind him to do an oil painting of Julie tomorrow.

Julie, the young model who worked in the Midas Bar at weekends, got dressed. However, after seeing it was only half-past six in the evening she relaxed by sitting down on a chair in the kitchen-come studio. As if settling down for the night, she said to the young artist, in a cute and comic voice, "It's funny, you know, I enjoy modelling for you; in fact, I feel more naked when I work in

that place in St Vincent Street. There I can feel the customers eyes crawl all over me, as I serve then drinks.”

Presently, the young artist walked her to the door, and just as Henry was about to close the door Julie dropped a fashion magazine on the floor that she had brought along with her to read and, as they both bent down to pick it up, two faces looked at each other, and a strange attraction of one sort or another flowed through them both. Julie’s eyes then went to Henry’s eyes, and as she stood up she touched the side of his face with a precious finger, and her lips moved, “I know you are going to be a great artist, Henry,” she said softly, and she kissed him full on the mouth, “And you won’t forget me, Henry, will you when you get there?”

The young artist’s eyebrows went up and, as a wonderful smile crossed his face, he said to her softly, “No, I won’t do that, Julie.”

Henry said goodnight to his model, and looked forward to seeing her again next week, same time, same place. Later on that night, around midnight, David the DJ and Sandy Squirrel turned up for a late night drink at the artist’s flat. They had been over at Maestros nightclub. Sandy had spent much of the day modelling for a wholesale jewellery company, who had an office in Mitchell Street. The male model couldn’t wait to tell his friends all about what he had been up to. Sandy, with one hand on the mantelpiece and the other on his hip, looked up at the cornice in the middle of the room. He coughed a few times to get some attention. Then the male model told his friends all about the diamonds and pearls he had seen in the shop where he had been modelling, and how the man had been ever so kind to him, “He really was such a nice chap - good-looking too,” he declared, before clicking his tongue twice.”

Sandy eventually sat down, but he could not sit still; he got up and walked around the living room. As he paced around, the male model made up jokes and started telling funny stories. Later on in the living room the male model danced for his friends. He shouted at David, in his deep and impressive voice, “See this hand, Mr DJ, this hand has been working hard today wearing rings and

watches!” then his eyes looked round quickly at his friends, and when the DJ laughed, the male model added in a falling tone, “Oh, I feel wonderful tonight, orgasmic.”

David the DJ took a cigarette from a packet lying on top of the glass coffee table and, as he sat back on the red velvet sofa, he turned to Henry and mocked the male model, “Squirrel is getting a bit excited. I think he needs his nuts. What do you think, Henry?”

Eventually, the Squirrel calmed down and sat beside the DJ on the sofa. And when he got up close to him he laughed, and said, “It’s a wonder you’ve got any breath left to puff that cigarette - with all the energy you are expending, at the moment, on these nubile young ladies up at Maestros.” Then he screamed again, “You’re unbelievable,” and he tried to tickle the DJ.

“Get off, Squirrel!”

“That’s what happens to naughty boys, you know. They get tickled to death.”

“Go on beat it, Squirrel!”

Maestros had finished early due to a function being cancelled that night, and nothing else seemed to be happening in town. Unfortunately, all the other clubs in the city were known to be full of boring middle-aged men and women on a Monday night, so the Art-lovers decided that they would stay in.

David the DJ, on the topic of successful nightclubs, maintained that the place where he worked was famous because of one thing, and one thing only: “It’s the music that brings people to our club - that’s why it’s the best club in town.”

Sandy thought about this, and then to annoy the DJ, he said, “I noticed last Sunday it was quite quiet.”

David replied sharply, “That’s because it was a public holiday, and a lot of people were away for the weekend - you fool.”

The next topic seemed to be about why people go to nightclubs, anyway. The DJ said with conviction, “It’s because we love to dance our lives away, and there is always a chance to meet someone and fall in love - simple, really, when you think about it.”

Henry added in a voice full of authority, "Glasgow is a dance city. It may not have the same amount of people as other big cities in Europe, but for the majority of punters in Glasgow the world kicks off on a Friday night, and the people love to boogie on down, and dance, till the early hours of Sunday morning. Then they go back to work on Monday."

Sandy did not say anything - which was unusual - he just strolled about the room clicking his tongue and talking to himself. Henry lit a cigarette and, after thinking about some of the good times they had had together, he nodded as if he agreed with his own thoughts. "Yes, life can be a living death if the imagination is not alive. When you are down a wonderful spirit in your soul sets you free. I guess it is just like looking at a wonderful painting: you forget all about the mundane and commonplace world around you, and you become alive in that other place. I believe that ever since ancient times people have been going there. Plato called it his theory of forms: for if the truth about reality is always in our soul, the soul must be immortal. So to get at the truth we must recollect it; we must remember it. It's magic. I call it a glass world, where lines and colours are beautiful: where everything is known to everyone. You learn all about the real world in that other place. Love is the first thing you learn when you become an Art-lover, and you never forget it; for you know that your friends, your family, and your lovers all live in that other place, too."

Sandy laughed at the way his friend, the young artist, spoke, then he fell silent and wondered about what he had just heard. The male model sat down and after thinking about past times, he spoke about the first time he had set eyes on the young artist at Maestros, "You said the very same thing that night I met you, and in the very same voice. I can remember you saying it." Sandy screamed, then he quoted the words of the young artist back to him: "We are all Art-lovers that's what draws us together, Squirrel."

David the DJ smiled, and nodded at Henry. After screaming another wild laugh, Sandy Squirrel jumped off the comfortable settee and, as he wandered around the room he shouted, "But little

did we know, you would pack in your job and become a painter - nae a Bohemian - who paints not only pictures, but one who paints on walls and pavements too!"

The artist laughed at Sandy Squirrel. Henry was in a good mood, and he served them coffee. Later, after the clock on the wall had turned to half-past two in the morning, the Art-lovers started to talk about the new British enterprise culture of the early nineteen eighties. Sandy felt passionate about what was happening, "People are fed up with the unions making themselves rich - it's time for a change, Henry. What this country needs is to let loose the individual in the marketplace - give him a chance. People want to do their own thing. They want to be their own boss, and own their own things. Yes, I tell you, the name of the game from now on is to run your own business, and not to worry about the unions."

Henry picked up his coffee cup and, before he took a sip out of it, he sang the new eighties theme song to his friends: "Greed is good, Greed is good, let it trickle down, everyone will get their share from the entrepreneur's cup. Greed is good, Greed is good, let it trickle down..."

Hearing the retort the male model added angrily, "Oh, for God's sake, Henry, we are the only nation in the world that has got a phobia about success," and as he got up, he tugged at the sleeve of his suit jacket, as if getting ready to get stuck into the dishes. Then once more the male model wandered around the room. He said while watching his friends, "We don't want to go back to the winter of discontent, do we? The dead waiting to be buried, litter everywhere..."

Certainly, the stories about in the press made the trade unions look like raving loonies, and everyone knew - except the shop stewards - that moves were now in place to break the print unions, the miners, and the steel men too. There may have been a crisis in the Middle East, but there was an even bigger one in the heart of every working class man. The working man seemed lost between two ages: the age of toil for wages, and the new order of no society, no state, no brothers, no sisters - only you. And at what

price should people embrace new technology? Will it put millions out of work? Do you want to have a classless society? Do you want to do away with the upper class - whoever they are - and let the middle class become the new working class? Should the market economists put people on the dole, and say to them: 'Listen, there is not enough work about, so stay on the dole, for there we will still make money off you?' Or should we go for a classless society where everyone has the chance to become a millionaire.

The young artist, who had once worked in a newspaper office, felt that the everyday working man had become seduced by money, and he was now half-asleep wandering around the workplace, while secret planners were working round the clock to put him out of work. It was a simple theory really. All you had to do was embrace the new enterprise culture, and throw away all your beliefs of fraternity and fellowship. The issue as regards the dignity of labour seemed to be forgotten about. Henry felt that soon there would be a feeling about to divorce your brother if he believed in any kind of union: man to man, woman to woman, woman to man. The bosses in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-one tried to justify the new enterprise culture by saying that all men are equal in and out of work. The differential would be great, for the young artist knew that salaries in the future would not be monitored by the trade unions. They will somehow be related to the individual's understanding of market economics.

Henry listened to the debate in his flat and realised that when the enterprise wheel stopped spinning there would be winners and losers, on both sides. And the people in limbo would protest no more. He could see a time when no angry voices would shout for this or that legislation to be brought in; for it would all be over. Feeling down about it all, he cracked a joke: "I tell you that in the future large corporate companies will have to bring in court jesters to cheer up their employees, because they have killed the spirit of the working class man. And in the next decade certain people, of all ages, will have to go to school for the rest of their lives. Mark my words people will soon be able to be transported from one end of this town to the other in rickshaws, advertising capitalist

slogans. The rich will hide in dark limousines. Greed is good, let it trickle down. Greed is good, let it trickle down,” sang the young artist.

Sandy cried, “Oh, for God’s sake, Henry!”

After thinking about how things would end up, when society eventually settled down again, after a decade or so of the enterprise culture, the young artist took a white sheet of paper from the coffee table in front of him and, on top of the square pane of glass inside the table, he drew three circles, inside each other. The young artist, when he felt he had the others in the palm of his hand, sat back and said in a pronounced tone, “The inner circle represents the people who control society: the rich people. The next circle, the largest looking circle, represents the middle class; this in my view represents everyone from the well-off, to people on the lowest working wage. The thin outer circle represents the unemployed, the beggars, and the people who cannot find work, for one reason or another; three circles for every one to fall into. The enterprise culture, they say, is for everyone: for what is a coin that drops into a beggar’s hat, but a coin that will find itself in a rich man’s hand tomorrow. Henry paused, then added, “So when people say to you in the future, ‘What circle are you moving in?’ they will be trying to find out if you are rich, or if you are working, or if you are living on the outer edge of life.”

David the DJ loved this wild talk and, as he looked at the young artist’s face, he cried, “Brilliant, Bow Wow!”

Henry had read in the new Scottish Sunday paper, The Sunday Standard, that very morning, about a man named Burrell, and how the Glasgow District Council was building a Gallery, featuring his name. Apparently, the man was a born collector, and throughout his life he had amassed a wonderful collection of art: Ancient, Oriental, Medieval, and Gothic - and some of the paintings were just too good to be true: Rembrandt, Degas, Bellini, to name but a few. One of the conditions of the agreement, however, stated that the collection was never to be moved abroad.

Henry told them what he had read, then he added, “I doubt if the new enterprising culture will go for that much,” and as he

looked at the DJ he laughed,” They will probably try to ship it around the world if it appears enterprising to do so.” Henry laughed again then went to the window and there he looked down on to the famous late night, early morning, street below. Suddenly, he had an idea,” Let’s go to Maestros.”

Sandy did not understand, for the club had shut an hour ago; but the DJ caught the idea, and he jumped out of his seat, “Yes, let’s spray paint the walls with our art thoughts, so that people will remember us forever.”

Henry walked back from the window and looked at Sandy Squirrel; he was standing staring at him, “You can be look out, Squirrel, come on.”

Sandy could not believe it, and he said, “You two are both off your heads. Look at the time, it’s nearly three o’clock in the morning, and you two are going to spray paint names on walls.”

As the young artist went to get some cans of paint from the kitchen-come-studio, David the DJ said in an upbeat tone, “I’m going to say something about my favourite records, and something about the people that go to the club, every weekend.”

Within five minutes the Art-lovers were out of the flat, and walking across Sauchiehall Street, towards the famous nightclub, and even though it was three o’clock in the morning, standing in the doorway opposite the artist’s apartment were two hairies, eating chips and drinking ginger. As he walked by them, David heard them swearing and the DJ turned, and said cheekily, “Give us a chip?” The Glasgow hairies stared at him, then one of the hairies gave the DJ a mouthful of abuse. She told him, “Go and buy yur own chips, ya hacket face balloon.”

Sandy Squirrel screamed with laughter, and one of the hairies - sensing the male model man to be different - gave him a mouth full of abuse too, “You get lost too, ya poof.”

The drab nightclub building, in hardly anytime at all, soon had colourful designs and names all over it. Over the doorway and under the box like canopy, Henry sprayed:

ART DREAMS JUST FOR YOU
PLEASE COME INSIDE

The Art-lovers soon made their way back down the hill of Scott Street and, as they went back up the stairs to the artist's apartment, Henry wondered if the owners would keep the new sign - just as they had left it. David the DJ, on the other hand, wondered, "Do you think they will blame the pretentious art students, who go to school at the top of the hill, and ban them from the club?"

When they were all settled back down in the living room, of the artist's flat, Henry brought out his acoustic guitar and made up a poem, and sang it to his friends: "Screamers and dreamers and artists and friends all live crazy lives in a world that never ends."

After the singing, Henry opened a bottle of red wine, and the three Art-lovers toasted each other. Henry said, as the three wine glasses crashed together, "Friends for life!"

David the DJ shouted, "Live life to the full!"

Sandy - who at the best of times jumped around like a lunatic - for some reason became sad, and as he sat down on the sofa in the living room he started to cry.

David the DJ couldn't believe it and, as if annoyed, he shouted over at him in a harsh tone, "What's up with you, then, Squirrel!"

Henry Bowers liked the young lady who worked in the arts store, opposite the library, in Royal Exchange Square. He thought she looked like an exotic cat. One day while searching for some watercolour paper inside the shop, Henry bent down beside her. The exotic cat turned round, and when she smiled at him, just for a moment, he thought she was going to kiss him. The young artist smiled back at her, then to make conversation he asked her about the different types of paper the store sold.

The exotic cat he noticed, before answering, stared at him with incredible green eyes, full of knowledge, full of wonder. He thought she stared at him as if she understood the fate of any man who looked her way. Her dyed dark red hair, short, funny and pop, Henry thought contemporary, but it did not detract in anyway from her love of being natural. The young artist liked her very much, and he thought a lot about her, “Yes, I’ll need to ask her out the next time I go into the store,” he said to himself, after leaving the shop.

At midday a few days later, when working funny enough on a painting titled: Inside the Arts Shop, the young artist ran out of paints, so he went back to the arts store in Royal Exchange Square. As soon as he entered the store, Henry bumped into a

friend called Jack. He had met Jack a few years ago up at Maestros.

The young artist, as he chatted, glanced over his shoulder and caught sight of the exotic young cat. He could see that she was speaking to someone at the far end of the shop where they sold miscellaneous items: jewellery, bits and bobs, and fashionable things of this and that kind. The young artist, after saying goodbye to his friend, quickly made up an excuse to engage the pretty young thing. He walked over to her and said, "Can you tell me something about the paintbox sets, that you sell, here?" and he pointed across at them.

The box sets were stacked high above the paints, along the faraway wall and, as they both walked over towards them, Henry smiled at her and said softly, "Can I buy you a drink, sometime?"

The young exotic woman let her protective cool image fall for a moment and, a little flustered with the shop so busy, she replied in a husky voice, "I'm sorry, I'm living with someone at the moment." The young artist prior to this had - for he was not sure - searched her hand to see if she wore a ring, but he saw none. From the tone of her voice something told Henry that it would never work anyway; and the young artist sighed and said, "Oh, well," and smiled at her.

Then he looked at one of the box sets in front of him that had a print of *The Crau with Peach Trees in Bloom*, on it, and he marvelled at the brush strokes, the sky, and wondered where the path led to in the painting. With the dream now gone, the young artist knew he was back to the land of paint and other materials. Henry bought a watercolour set and a little sketch pad, so that the next time he went to the country he could jot down some ideas: hopefully for some new paintings. Henry, full of fun, smiled at the young lady and, as she processed the order, he said softly to her, "People who live together should wear arm bands, so I know not to ask them out."

The exotic cat laughed, and the young artist paid for his things, then he left the shop. Presently, the young artist walked along to the Building Society, and he went inside and took ten

pounds out of his account. Henry then walked back round Royal Exchange Square, all the time viewing the magnificent Stirling's Library building where he knew all the old and new books were housed. The young artist felt that the Forum came straight from Rome; for a moment he glanced at the Corinthian columns, then up towards the cupola, and finally at the round clock-face set inside the square. "Three fifteen, is it that time already."

As usual, Friday being the official start of the weekend brought everyone out onto the city streets. Many workers got away earlier on a Friday, and most of them wandered around for a time before they went home. Henry Bowers feeling in a strange sort of way part of the business world went into Charlie Parkers Bar and Restaurant, situated on the left hand side of the square, and bought himself a glass of Chardonnay wine. The young artist sat down on a black velvet couch next to a fake palm tree opposite the bar. Henry smiled at some boisterous children, whose parents had brought them into the sophisticated high class metallic establishment for something to eat. The children, who were all running around shouting and playing games, behaved as if they were used to chic surroundings. With innocence and hope in his heart, Henry looked at them, and thought to himself, "The children of tomorrow will give me hope for the present, and it's for them I will paint." The young artist when he did not have his canvas in front of him loved to imagine it there. He agreed with Ingres that: 'Drawing is the probity of art'.

Presently, he took out the little A6 sketch pad, that he had just bought from the art shop, from an inside pocket of his green tweed jacket. After taking a drink of cool wine, the young artist started to sketch some of the customers, who were going to and from the bar. The people he knew that came in here were mainly all upper class, white collar, and fashionable. The young artist soon transferred a reflected image from his mind to the paper. Henry Bowers had to draw, for he knew that the world around him would soon turn cold and grey if he did not try and capture it. "Go away artless world," said the young artist's mind, when the death of life came upon him.

Henry sometimes, however, wondered about the pessimistic world that loomed over him: "It's as if mother earth has no where to go, and no God to guide it, and therefore no love to give it, and because of this it haunts the human race, "Go away artless world, shoo!"

Thankfully, the pencil lines soon made another face and then another figure on the small page, and the young artist marvelled to himself, praising the spirit of creation. Henry finished his wine, and as he gazed around him once more, at the afternoon faces, sitting here and there inside the fashionable cafe bar. Henry thought to himself, "I may not make any money during my lifetime, but to see the truth in art is a wonderful thing, and to try and capture it in any shape, or form, is a rare gift indeed. Praise the Good Lord."

Before putting the sketch book back in his pocket, Henry looked at the drawing once again. Then he noticed the figure of a beautiful girl walk into the fashionable metallic bar, meet a friend, kiss her, then sit down on a chair beside her at the bar. Henry seemed to know her from somewhere: "Yes, of course, it's the young lady from the art gallery - the one with the ice cold blue eyes."

And as she picked up the menu from the middle of the bar, Henry overheard her say to the young lady she was with, "You're never going to believe this, but you know my boss, Herbert J.Hoffman?"

"Yes."

"Well a few weeks ago he was accused, by some religious fanatic, of selling forgeries, and wait to you hear this - of cavorting with male prostitutes inside the Vintners Bar down at the River Clyde."

As the laughter rang out, Henry looked down at the black carpet, and with a smile he said to himself, "It's time to get out of here, Henry Bowers."

Henry put the sketch pad back in his pocket, and left the chic clientele behind him; he headed back to his flat on Sauchiehall Street. The young artist about half an hour later started to get

ready for the weekend; first he took a hot bath, then he washed his hair. Henry feeling refreshed then had something to eat, and after a cup of tea he telephoned his mate Sandy Squirrel.

Henry met the Squirrel that night at nine-thirty inside Nico's Brasserie, and after a drink in their favourite bar they headed up to Maestros. Henry wondered, as they walked by the people queuing up to get into the club, if Kim would make an appearance tonight. Squirrel seemed to read the young artist's thoughts and, in a deep smooth lusty tone, he whispered to him, "Oh, she'll turn up all right, that one." And after a strange look, the male model man added, "She'll flash her boobs at you, then she will disappear, don't you worry about that," then he screamed with laughter.

However, the artist knew that if she did not phone, then she would not be there. It is true to say that on a Friday night there is a special feeling all over the dance city of Glasgow. The people come into town from all over the country just to dance. When the young artist heard the music coming out of Maestros, as they skipped the queue, he thought to himself, "It's as if people can throw off time. It's as if they can remove their burdens and all the other things that oppress them, and rejoice and be happy and free."

Henry told Sandy this, and as the two of them walked by some beautiful girls dancing on the dance floor, the young artist added, "Follow the music Sandy Squirrel, it has all the clues to the phallus, the stars, the mystic will," and the young artist screamed a scream like his mate Sandy Squirrel.

Sandy Squirrel looked at him, then he pulled him onto the dance floor, "Come on, Henry, let's dance!"

Not long after this, at the bar in the nightclub, the young artist watched the dancers and chatted to his friends, but he knew that he had to get back to the flat, and finish the painting that he had not long ago started: Inside the Arts Shop, and then start on another oil painting, the one of Julie the bar girl. So after another drink, with a melancholy look in his eyes, he stared back down onto the dance floor. Then he indicated to Sandy Squirrel that he would not be staying too long, "If I were not up so early in the

morning, Squirrel, I would be back down there on the dance floor with you - I would."

Sandy laughed and, after smiling at some people he knew, he told Henry Bowers about a wild party he had been to the other night, "Oh, Henry, you should have seen them," he said staring at the memory. After screaming and holding onto the artist, he added something about Mummy Dust, an Orgasmatron, and men dressed as women, and women dressed as men, "Oh, Henry some people were entwined together in the strangest positions."

Putting his drink down on top of the bar, Henry said calmly, "Right, Squirrel, what happened?"

Sandy Squirrel, a few moments later, stopped screaming, clicked his tongue twice, then for pure theatre, he paused, "Oh, Henry, you should have been there, they were all out of there boxes on cocaine and hashish."

Henry smiled, but did not ask who 'they' were. David the DJ had the night off and had taken a friend for something to eat. He had telephoned Henry earlier on in the evening, and had told him that they would probably turn up at the club later around midnight. However, the young artist felt like an early night, and after another drink at the bar with Sandy Squirrel, Henry excused himself, "Right, I'm off, I've got to get up early tomorrow and paint." Henry walked out of the club, and as he whistled the new wave tune by Yazoo that was playing, Sandy Squirrel, full of fun, screamed after him, "Henry, don't go," and a few of the regulars who knew the artist and the male model laughed at him.

Outside the club in the midnight hour, Henry Bowers walked back down Scott Street and across Sauchiehall Street, in the direction of his flat. And as he walked, the young artist watched all the faces coming up the hill towards the club, and as he walked on his thoughts seemed to meander here and there as if to plan, or execute, something in the future. Just at that moment, the young artist wondered what Kim was doing and, as he looked way out into the millions of galaxies in the sky above him, he thought about the time that had past since the Art-lovers had first met up at Maestros, and how different incidents in life had made them

different people. The young artist, in a sad voice, said to himself: "We are just people destined to drift apart, I guess."

Henry had loved Kim, but he knew that the time had gone by for them to be as one. The illusions in life for some reason had moved them away from each other. Henry finished the painting, Inside the Arts Shop, about two thirty in the morning, and after sorting out a few things for tomorrow the young artist went to bed; but as he lay there his mind seemed to fill up with strange thoughts about strange people who did not like him. Henry couldn't get to sleep.

Suddenly, the face of Herbert J.Hoffman appeared in the room, and in a smooth voice the dealer said to the young artist: "We will never let you into play our game Mr Bowers. You are not someone we can do business with. We like artists who understand the middle class mentality of art - nice and easy going. We don't like people who believe in things. Market artists seem to sell well, and of course we get the money. They can be as outrageous as they like, and paint what they want. It's quite fair - is it not Mr Bowers. The problem with you is that you believe in things: you want to ennoble society. You believe in art for everyone. I must say how far do you think that would get us. Ask yourself how many people on unemployment benefit can buy an original painting by an original artist. And how many people, do you think can tell the difference between Rene Magritte, and Raphael. No, no, no, art is not for everyone. I am afraid, Mr Bowers, you are destined to be forgotten about..."

A few other anti-art men in the mind appeared. One sneered, "Like Cezanne people will be made to look at your pictures as a punishment."

They all gathered round and a board meeting was held. Presently, a vote was cast to exile all new up and coming artists who wanted to change things; then the nightmare disappeared. Henry awoke, his mind racing and his body sweating; he got up and got dressed. The young artist knew he had to get his anger out of his system, somehow. He grabbed a can of spray paint from the cupboard in the hall. Then he headed outside into the dark night.

Henry, however, did not realise the time and, when he looked at a large electric wall-clock inside one of the shops at the far end of Sauchiehall Street, he wondered to himself, "I feel as if I haven't slept. I must have been in a trance, look at the time, it's nearly four o'clock in the morning."

It was a cold dark night; everything in the city centre looked funny - almost religious, "How amazing," thought Henry. "It looks as if the city will always be stranded between Friday night and Saturday morning,"

But then again the young artist's artistic mind, as he walked on, mumbled to him that the city had just undressed itself for the night, and was having a little snooze before the multitude of faces came back round in a few hours time. To cheer himself up, Henry whistled a nonsense tune to himself. The young artist as he passed British Homes Stores looked inside through the big glass window, and as he caught a glimpse of his own reflection. He could have sworn he heard someone behind him say, "Oh, I have simply got to buy it - look at the price..."

One or two beggars came sleepwalking by the young artist and spoke to him. One man asked for some money, another asked him for a cigarette, and then up a little further another man asked him, in a strange almost friendly voice, for a word about a world that had made him poor. Way off in the distance another lonely man could be seen at the far end of Sauchiehall Street, drifting around as if waiting to praise the morning light.

Soon the artist had Buchanan Street in his sights, then Royal Exchange Square, and finally the Stirling's Library. The young artist quickly walked up the three little steps, and he was soon under the portico. Henry brought out a spray can, and glanced at two late night lovers kissing each other as they lay up against one of the Corinthian columns. The young artist nearly shrieked like Sandy Squirrel when he saw who it was, "Goodness me it's the exotic cat from the arts store." Then his mind whispered, "So that's where she lives with her live-in lover, is it."

Henry went to work quickly and sprayed the horrible brown coloured library doors with art axioms:

THE ART OF READING IS NOT IN THE WORDS THE ART OF CONCEIVING COMES FROM ABOVE

Then he sprayed the square panels of the doors in colours of yellow, blue, and grey, and inside of them the young artist sprayed circles in other colours, just like his painting: Fashion Squares. The two young lovers, however, were too tired and dizzy in love to pay any attention to the man close by spray painting the library building. In no time at all, Henry put the spray can back in his pocket, and he went back down the three little steps again. And as he moved away from the classical building, the young artist looked east, down Ingram Street, at the deep blue pre-dawn sky. He knew that soon the glorious sun would be up to signal daybreak. Henry turned round and smiled at the statue of Wellington, for the duke had his usual traffic cone hat on; however, as he walked away he cursed the city for its attitude towards art. Henry spat on the ground and said out loud, "A curse on all artistic financial vandals, who turn away from helping people with their art."

Henry went out that Sunday evening for a coffee with David the DJ, and on Monday morning he got up early and tried to sell some of his paintings to an obscure dealer who had a place just off Argyle Street. When he arrived at the gallery he noticed a young woman inside the store. She was dressed in a business two-piece suit, and had a healthy glow like a farmer's daughter. With hardly any finesse she picked up a picture frame and placed it on top of a busy desk.

The young artist looked at a counterfeit Kandinsky behind her, painted by a local artist. Then he said to her, "Can I speak to the owner?"

The young lady put down another picture frame and smiled. Then she answered the young artist in a business tone, "Oh, I'm sorry the woman who runs the gallery is away to California. Shall I make an appointment for you to see her when she gets back?"

Henry smiled and asked her, "When is she back?"

Looking inside a big red diary, that had letters falling out of every page, the young assistant found the date when the owner was due back in the country. Looking at a letter that had a foreign

stamp on it, she told the young artist, in a loud confident voice, “November the twenty sixth,” then she added in a fresh tone, “yes, that’s the date.” And as she put the letter back inside the big red diary, she added, “Time flies, I guess, for those who fly.”

Henry, knowing that it was only May, felt like saying, “Is that this year, or next year,” but instead he moved straight to the point. “Can I bring some of my paintings down, and put them on show here?”

With a sad smile and an uncaring voice, the young assistant told him, “I’m very sorry we are fully booked up for the rest of the year,” then she paused, before adding, “why not come back towards the end of the year, and see what happens.”

The young artist said nothing and walked out of the shop, and went straight back to his flat, cursing the new enterprising culture as he went. Not far from the shop the young artist made up a rhyme and sang it to himself: “Fashion, market, enterprising, unhelpful whores - that’s what they are,” and repeated the phrase many times to himself, as he walked away: “Fashion, market, enterprising, unhelpful whores - that’s what they are...”

When he got back to the flat the young artist walked into the kitchen-come- studio, and feeling sad he looked at all the paintings lying up against the wall, and after sitting down by the table, he sighed to himself, “Oh, well, I’m afraid the art world is too busy to do anything for you lot today,” and he wept tragic tears that seemed to be full joy and hate.

Henry, when he got himself together, made a coffee and wondered what in the world he was going to do. The young artist, as he poured some boiling water from the kettle into his cup, suddenly remembered, “Yes, that’s right, the art attack on the library last night. I got out of bed in a rage, and spray painted the main doors of the building. I think I’ll just go down and cheer myself up, and see how the axioms, squares and circles, look in daylight.” Checking his watch, the young artist thought, “One o’clock, I don’t think the cleaners will have arrived yet to wipe my words away - yea, let’s go.”

As usual, all the streets that led to Royal Exchange Square at lunchtime seemed full of business people going to and from their office blocks. Henry from a distance watched some of them walk by the library building, and the young artist wondered if any of them had observed the writing on the doors yet. Suddenly, out of the crowd came two men in coloured boiler suits, carrying buckets and brushes and, as soon as they got to the front doors of the library, they started to erase the writing, the circles, and the squares.

Henry walked under the portico and heard the cleaner, who had long straggly hair, say to his mate, "It must have been a nutcase who did this - don't you think. I mean what does it mean: The Art of Reading is not in the words."

Henry noticed that there were no lovers under the portico at lunchtime, and when the artist looked away from the cleaners, he gazed over at the arts store where the young exotic woman worked, and he smiled to himself, "She lives in two different worlds that girl: during the day she sells art, and during the night she makes love outside the library. I knew she was different when I set eyes on her."

Nico's in the afternoon had a completely different feel to it from the one it had at night-time. The waiters in the afternoon now served businessmen, and that new nineteen eighties wonder phenomenon: the smart, cool, independent, unkind business woman. The young artist, as he ordered a drink, thought to himself, "Modern women float in and out of here like phantoms on fire; I think they are all pretending to be men," and as he laughed, he looked at the blue and green flowery pattern on the tiles on the wall behind the bar. Then he wondered to himself, "And they tell you in the papers and magazines that communist women are rough."

Henry bought a drink and marvelled at how the wonderful night-time atmosphere of the bar could simply just disappear during the day. However, he knew the creatures would be out again at night, searching for love and emotion. Through the window the young artist stared out at some figures walking up and

down Sauchiehall Street, and as he stared he thought to himself, "The cafe bar Nico's during the day seems so ordinary and businesslike, with no creative spirit around it. It's as if the spirit of change has been replaced by the spirit of exchange. It's the death of love, I believe, for anyone who puts currency before their fellow man. I bet they will soon have a no-smoking section in this cafe if the business men and women want it. Everything will soon be geared towards serving the entrepreneurial spirit."

Henry had brought his morning mail along with him to read: four bills, two information letters, and two charity leaflets - but no giro. Knowing that he had signed on two days ago. Henry would now have to go and report the giro lost, at the local unemployment office. He would have to ask them to give him another giro over the counter. The young artist mused, as he stuffed the letters back inside his jacket pocket, "Someone has probably swiped it at the sorting office."

Henry, when he got to the government office halfway down Pitt Street, asked a young man in a dark suit to help him. The po-faced man behind the prison bars told him in a stern voice, "Take a seat and a ticket, and wait for your number to be called."

The design of the unemployment office fascinated the young artist: for they were being slowly transformed. The industry for helping people back to work - who had been put out of work because of the mad greedy capitalists in the city - was trying to look colourful, modern, and chic. Someone just then who was working in the office, not far from where Henry, said to his colleague that the bars could be coming down soon. His mate next to him nodded and reckoned that it was now acceptable to be on the dole: "That's right unemployed people are a vital part of the monetarist plan," he chuckled, before picking up a telephone: "Department of Social Security. Can I help you?"

It was true the out of work were for the first time being treated as if they were an important industry. However, the young artist knew that (what this essentially meant was) once you were on the dole you hardly had any chance of getting off it: "The outer circle spins round, but the fat upper class care for no one."

Henry had heard it said by an important TV political commentator: 'City people need the underclass on the dole so that they can scare the workers into low pay and third world working conditions,' and he thought there was something in that.

Inside the Social Security Office, Henry sat down beside a young lady - he thought she looked about twenty three - and he listened to the chart music that was being piped all over the office to soothe the pain of not being wanted.

A well-known drug addict appeared in the office, and as he sat down opposite Henry, he shouted to one of the staff for a glass of water. Then he looked at the young woman who was sitting next to the young artist, Henry Bowers. Making a sad face the drug addict said to her, "You're lovely."

Just then a woman worker behind the barricades looked up, then she got off her seat and walked away. When the young lady, sitting beside Henry, smiled at the addict, the young artist thought she knew that withdrawal symptoms had only beauty as a free fix from pain. A Social Security worker came out from the other side, via a side door, with a plastic cup full of water, and as she handed it to the drug addict, she said, "There you are Derek."

Derek took a drink of water, then he said to the young artist, "You should take her out man, she's lovely."

Henry smiled and turned to the young woman and said, "Should I?"

Not long after this Derek lamented about the category he had been put into by the new enterprising society. And as he put his hand through his sandy red hair, that looked still wet from washing, he whined in a daft voice, "You've only got one life man, so why not live it to the full."

A moment or two later, he looked up at the young artist and, as if Henry had committed a social offence, he asked him, "So what are you in for, then?"

With hardly any feeling in his voice Henry told him, "My giro didn't come, mate." The addict groaned and knowing the torment he had gone through himself while waiting for money to come through the door, Derek sympathised with the young artist, Henry

Bowers: "Oh, I know what you mean, man. You're waiting behind the door all morning and it doesn't come - it's a real bastard."

Someone shouted, "Language Derek!" and the young lady beside the young artist laughed.

A passing thin employee, a man with a hooked nose, who the artist thought had some sympathy with the plight of the unemployed, stopped and had a chat with the young man. Presently, a stern young woman, who worked behind the barriers, opened a door, and with a duplicate giro in her hand, she shouted the name: "Mr Henry Bowers!"

Henry signed for his giro and, as he walked by the young lady, on his way out of the government office, he whispered to her, "I'll meet you down at the Centre Court Bar, at the far end of Sauchiehall Street, for a drink in ten minutes," and he smiled at her.

When she came in to the bar about half an hour later, she looked lost, as if she had forgotten the features of the young man, who had sat beside her inside the Social Security Office. The young artist spotted her and waved her over, and the unusual event seemed to make things go quickly. Henry said hello, asked her name, then bought her a drink. The bar was quite busy and, as he waited for the barman to bring back his change, he said to her, "I'm so glad there is someone else in the world who looks happy, who is on the dole."

During the conversation at the bar they chatted about places and people they both knew. Then Henry touched on the new radical policy that was being brought in by the new conservative government, "They want you to start up your own business, because they don't have any ideas how to generate new industries. It's all a great game - don't you think."

She laughed and took a drink of wine, "It certainly is."

Henry showed her the daft card, that he had got printed a few weeks ago, when he attacked the brewery office: "That's why I have set myself up in business: Mr Henri Matisse, painter and decorator - what do you think about that, then?" and he handed her his card.

They sat inside the fashionable Centre Court bar for about an hour drinking and chatting. Henry drank lager and Elaine white wine. Sometimes, Henry would say something about the design of the place, and they would laugh. A customer, a slim man of about forty, sitting next to them at the bar looked quite tipsy. They both thought him very funny. The tipsy customer, they noticed, always eyed the waitress on the other side of the bar every time she passed by him. He would always say to her in a daft voice, "Anyone for tennis?" and make a stupid face at her.

Henry bought another drink, then out of the blue the young artist wondered if Elaine would model for him: "Why not come back to the flat and model for me," he said coaxingly, "I haven't got any money, but I can offer you a glass of wine."

Elaine put her fingers through her light brown shoulder length hair, and looked at the young artist full in the face. Then she looked at the waitress behind the tennis bar, and with a smile she echoed his words, back to him, "Why not."

They had one more drink before they left the modern bar, and to kill time Henry told Elaine a funny story that he had heard recently: "A tradesman and his apprentice were working at the morgue and, one morning not long after they had started work, the tradesman said to the young lad: 'Go out and get me the large ratchet from the van, son, will you.' When he was gone the tradesman quickly threw a white sheet over himself, and lay down on top of a table in the middle of the morgue along with the other corpses. Presently, with the ratchet in hand, the lad wandered back into the place where they were working. The tradesman heard his footsteps and he slowly sat up. The young apprentice got such a fright that he smacked the ratchet over the head of the moving body inside the white sheet. Then he ran out of the morgue screaming."

Henry Bowers and Elaine laughed all the way back to the flat and, after two or three glasses of wine up at the flat, full of life, full of fun, Elaine undressed for the young artist. Looking at the beautiful naked figure in front of him, the young artist took a stick

of charcoal from the table in the kitchen-come-studio. He picked up his large sketch pad and started to sketch her firm body.

The young artist, Henry Bowers, had come to the conclusion that beauty was a collective thing. He thought to himself: "It can never be separated. Every shape has another shape to compliment it: the shoulder blade to the breast, the arm to the torso, the thigh to the waist. In fact, the whole human set up is complementary, for example when people stand together their faces tell us not only something about themselves, but what they feel about the person next to them. And that happens even if they have never met before. The secret somehow must lie in the relationship between the largest object and the smallest object, the brightest colour and the dulllest tone, the background and the foreground, the present world, the world of forms, the meaning of life, today, yesterday, and the dream of life still to come."

Watching his eyes glide over her young body she asked the young artist in a thoughtful tone, "Are you married, Henry?"

Henry heard the words like an echo in the brain and, after lifting up another stick of charcoal, he gently said, "No."

Elaine, free and naked now, started to talk wildly about her life, "I have always had a good healthy outlook towards sex, you know," she said in a forceful manner.

Henry's eyebrows went up, but he did not say anything, for the young artist knew that when a model gets bored, the model soon gets ready to go.

Still on the topic of sex, Elaine added, "I think a lot of people are afraid of their passions; it is only when they get into bed with each other that they realise that holding back sex is a crime against their own bodies."

The young artist's eyebrows went up again, and as he drew a line along her thigh, he coughed and quoted a meaningful art axiom to her: "Sex, art, and love, are all beyond our understanding."

Elaine, seemed surprised by this answer, and she fell silent for a time, as if to work out the words and what they meant. Then a

few minutes later she made a grand statement, "I'm a sexual being, I know what I am."

When the young artist had finished drawing her, Elaine wandered around the kitchen-come-studio naked, and when she came across the charcoal drawing of Julie the bar girl she stopped and looked at it. After a few moments of artistic reflection, she said in a soft tone, "Who is she?"

Henry walked over to Elaine and looked over her shoulder at the drawing and, as he looked down over two beautiful mountain breasts, he told her all about Julie, the young bar girl. Elaine smiled and as the young model slowly turned round she moved her lips towards his, and they sealed together in a kiss.

Just then on cue, like some kind of organised amateur dramatics play, the letter box rattled and from the stairway of the close a voice shouted out, "Yoo-hoo, Henry, darling! Are you in?"

The young artist burst out laughing and, as he looked towards the door, in the hallway, he said to the model, "My friend, Sandy Squirrel."

The young lady quickly grabbed her clothes from the chair by the kitchen table and, as she ran into the bathroom to get dressed, she laughed at the name of the male model.

Even though the hint of sex had been only present for a second or two, it lingered in the air, and it seemed everywhere when the male model man Sandy Squirrel walked into the kitchen-come-studio. Sandy Squirrel wondered who was in the flat. He had seen a naked figure, through the glass, run into the hallway and then into the toilet. A few moments later when Elaine came out of the toilet and into the kitchen-come-studio he stared at her. Then he started talking to Henry.

Sandy walked over to the window and looked at the drawing of Elaine on the easel, and after a moment or two he screamed with laughter. Elaine did not know what to do. Then in a deep manly voice, the male model teased the female model, "Please to meet you, I believe my friend Mr Henry Bowers has been working on you," then he screamed again. Sandy went quiet for a moment and, as he walked towards her, the male model looked closely at

the female model. Then he said in a slow sultry tone, “Oh, yes Henry likes the ladies,” and he clicked his tongue twice, as he moved by her.

Henry, a little embarrassed, said in a familiar tone, “We met an hour ago at the unemployment office.”

Sandy winked and said teasingly, “Oh, she’s a beauty all right, Henry.”

Henry smiled at his friend and, as he picked up a flat wash brush, he put it beside some others, so that he would remember to clean them later. Then he looked back over his shoulder towards his easel at the charcoal drawing of Elaine, “Yes, everybody loves a beautiful figure, Squirrel, but sadly no one wants to buy them.”

In a moment of pure fun, Sandy Squirrel moved up close to Elaine, and he smiled into her light blue grey eyes, purred, and stroked her arm, then he looked away.

Elaine looked at Henry as if to say: “Is this part of the act?”

The male model repeated in a soft voice, “Oh, yes, all the young ladies like Henry Bowers, the young artist.”

Elaine had never met anyone so highly strung and eccentric before, and she did not know how to take Sandy, or what to say to him. Henry tried to bring some realism back into the conversation. He turned to Elaine, and said with a smile, “Ask Mr Squirrel what he does for a living?”

Elaine giggled at Sandy’s pet name, and then she covered her mouth with a chubby hand as if to hide a grin. The beautiful female model then asked in an unnatural tone, “Who do you model for then, Mr Squirrel?”

Hearing no reply, Elaine fell silent, and her face showed signs of unease. Trying to cover up any embarrassment she quickly asked him again, “So who do you work for, then?”

Sandy Squirrel loved this, and he shrieked as if he was being asked an impertinent question. Finally, in his deep masculine voice, he replied, “I’m a photographic male model, my dear,” and he pulled at his jacket sleeve, till it came up to his elbow. Then once again he wandered around the kitchen-come-studio as if on a

catwalk. After clicking his tongue, he added haughtily, “My trade is my existence.”

Thankfully, things settled down after this, and they all started talking about art. The young artist showed them some of the modern paintings he had painted a few months ago. Not long after this Elaine left the apartment, and Henry inspired by the charcoal drawing of the girl he had just met at the employment bureau, suggested to Sandy Squirrel, “I think we should go and see someone in the new Enterprise Agency, that has just been set up in the middle of town, and ask them if they can help me produce a book on my paintings.

The male model wasn’t sure what to do, so he just sighed and said, “Yea.”

Henry then asked his friend again what he thought about the title of his exhibition: Fashion Squares, “I promise you, Squirrel, I will make the book colourful and bright, and there will be something in it for everyone.”

Sandy Squirrel looked over at some of the paintings that were lying up against the wall in the kitchen-come-studio and, after looking at a few of them, he replied slowly in that deep manly voice of his, “Yes, it sounds good, Henry.”

It didn’t take long for then to walk up to the Enterprise Office, that was situated right in the heart of the city centre; and once there inside the brand new building Henry looked at the nice sophisticated secretary with the little half moon glasses, who was seated behind a modern open plan reception desk. He noticed that everything for some reason in the office had been painted in either blue or green. The young artist said in a polite voice, “Can I speak to someone who is interested in helping people develop their artistic ideas?”

The switchboard operator smiled then, after asking the artist for his name, she contacted someone on the telephone. In a sweet voice she said, “There is a young artist, Mr Henry Bowers, come in to reception, and would like to speak with you...”

Sandy Squirrel caused mayhem, in the reception area, by walking up and down, and muttering outrageous things to himself,

“Oh, Henry it’s a gay day, all right. I’m feeling good about that job in Edinburgh. You must come through, stay at mine, we will eat in the best restaurants in town, go dancing at night. We will have a gay time all right...”

Presently, they were directed to the lift. The receptionist stood up and looked over her half moon glasses, and said in a kind voice, “Go all the way to the top floor, and Mr Smith will meet you there.”

When the two Art-lovers got out the lift they looked about each other. Then suddenly a grey-haired middle-aged man, who looked about fifty, met them. He was dressed in a white shirt, pinstripe suit trousers, and had on strange casual shoes like slippers. The odd thing about this fifty-year-old man, the young artist felt, was that he could see no dreams in his eyes; outwardly he appeared happy, but inwardly he seemed depressed. In a learned dull business voice, the man introduced himself, “My name is Geoffrey Smith, acting Chief Executive, and it is my job to regenerate the city. How can I help you?”

When he shook hands with the young Glasgow artist, Henry wondered about the poor man, who had no dreams in his eyes, and not to give away his thoughts he looked at his strange shoes that were like slippers.

Sandy took one look at him and shrieked, then he turned away. When he had controlled himself the male model turned back round, and said in a deep voice, “Please to meet you. How are you?” and stared at him as if understanding homosexual tendencies in enterprising agency men.

The man with no dreams in his eyes tried to see the joke, and he looked at the young artist, and said in a spiritless voice, “Did I say something funny?”

Henry, full of enthusiasm, told him all about his idea: “The book will be full of modern art,” and as he paused he glanced over Geoffrey Smith’s shoulder and noticed a modern painting on the wall. Then he added confidently, “I think it will be a bestseller - especially in the post punk climate.”

The man with no dreams in his eyes, in the same sophisticated monotone manic-depressive voice as before, said, “What kind of climate?”

Sandy looked at his friend the young artist, then he swayed towards him and gently held onto him for a moment. The male model replied in his deep authoritative voice, “Post Punk,” and winked at Mr Geoffrey Smith. Then he moved closer to him, and when no answer followed, the male model added, “New wave darling,” and he gave him one of his funny smiles.

The man in charge of the agency thought he had better say something quickly, “Oh, I don’t know, does anyone buy these kinds of books, today.”

Geoffrey noticed Henry’s eyes focus on his and flicker with anger; the acting Chief Executive then added quickly, although still in monotone, “I’m not trying to put you off, but it doesn’t fit into any business plan that I know,” then after a sigh, he added, “I’m just trying to be realistic.”

Henry felt like grabbing him and shaking him hard and saying to him, “Come on, Geoffrey, get yourself together, man, fill yourself up with some of that enterprising spirit that’s going around at the moment, forget the beautiful business plan in the brain, and let’s get the economy going,” but he didn’t think the poor man could take it.

Instead, Henry looked at his mate Sandy Squirrel, and he seemed to transfer the mad scene that was inside his head to his friend the male model. When the young artist lifted up his eyebrows, in the same manner as he did when Elaine had said something to him about being a sexual being, Sandy Squirrel shrieked.

Not knowing what to do or say Geoffrey Smith, acting Chief Executive for the Enterprising Agency cracked a joke, “I hope it’s not you two who are going round spray painting the city with art axioms.”

The young artist smiled at him, then he said something to him about art being for everyone. Presently, Henry started talking to him about some ideas he had in mind for his book, “You see

inside every square there is a representation of life: for life is a colour, an idea, an impression, a dream.”

After saying this the young artist stared into the dreamless eyes of the Acting Chief Executive of the Enterprising Agency and, for the first time in a long time, the young artist felt fear, “How can a man live without dreams?” he wondered to himself.

However, half way through his speech, the sad man who had no dreams in his eyes, who worked from nine to five for the Enterprise Agency, in Bothwell Street, said to Henry, “Oh, I don’t know is there anyone interested in colourful squares. Everyone is into catering these days.” Then after a groan, he added, “Do you know that today they are interviewing people for jobs in the new Hilton Hotel. The hotel is going to be situated not far from Charing Cross.”

Life had very few disappointments left for Henry Bowers the young artist, and he let the sad man rabble on about market forces, business plans, sales predictions, costs, and crazy capitalist concepts, that all seemed to be in vogue at the moment. Henry stared over towards the courtyard to where - on the other side of the building - young executives were all sitting around tables, inside glass offices. The young artist wondered how long it would take then to become like their dreamless Acting Chief Executive. The main problem with government sponsored agencies Henry felt was that the workers, after a time, all started to think the same way. The young artist felt the creative impulse became stifled as soon as it got fixed onto entrepreneurial colours, and the old out of date marketing plan kept rolling on and on. No one seemed to be interested in anything new, anymore. Modern man’s attitude was: “Yes, of course, we can justify three million on the dole: for it is the realisation of a global economy.”

Henry hated the modern business man’s attitude; for they were in a position to help - but very few of them did. Many of them turned out like the dreamless acting Chief Executive in charge of Business in Glasgow. Geoffrey said in a languid tone, “The price of books these days. Can you compete with large publishers?”

Seeing that nothing could move the poor man, the young artist became angry, and once or twice he nearly let his art thoughts slip out into the material world around him: “The devil’s midwives who strangle ideas at birth are everywhere in this modern world, and you are one of them Geoffrey - you don’t care, do you...”

So they said goodbye to the dreamless sad man, and as the two Art-lovers came out of the lift, opposite the main door, Henry looked around at the blue and green reception area where a few modern enterprising men were sitting, no doubt waiting for an appointment to see the dreamless Acting Chief Executive. Henry at that moment thought of spray painting the inside of the building with some of his art axioms:

CARTEL, COALITION, UNCARING SYNDICATE:
WHORES TO THE MARKET PLACE

Just then a group of young smartly dressed executives came back from lunch, and walked into the Enterprise Office. Not far from the lift, they all heard the young artist mimic the Acting Chief Executive’s dreamless voice, to the male model man beside him: “Oh, I don’t know is anyone interested in art these days. I think we should all just lie down and die. What do you think, Squirrel? Should we get some blankets out, and lie down here and die?”

Sandy Squirrel looked at the three young executives, and as a handsome blonde young man, in a lovat suit, pressed the round perspex button for the glass lift, the male model looked at him. Sandy said, “Oh, it’s all right darling, my friend’s an artist,” and then he took Henry’s arm, and smiled at the stranger.

As Henry Bowers walked outside the courtyard of the new Enterprise Office, he thought up some more art axioms to spray paint over other useless office blocks in the city centre of Glasgow:
WALLS WILL FALL DOWN BUT ART WILL ALWAYS SURVIVE

The words may have faded away in the young artist’s mind, but they were not forgotten about. Henry once outside the fancy building wrote them down on the flap of his small A6 art book.

And as the young artist put the small book back into his green tweed jacket pocket, he cursed the enterprise culture and spat on the Glasgow street. Henry, as they walked by the Toby Jug Bar in the direction of Central Station, growled in an angry voice, "This culture is so obsessed with the new right wing mood that they have forgotten all about art."

No one really could understand why it was that people were going ape over monetarism, and the new enterprise culture; for when you got close to the appointed government agencies some of them gave you very little help indeed. Henry Bowers did not like it one little bit, and even though it was only nineteen hundred and eighty-one the young artist felt that the rest of the decade - and maybe even the next one too - people would be under the influence of sad city dreamless enterprising men like Mr Geoffrey Smith. The executives he knew deep down had no real vigour, and no real interest in helping artists develop their work. It was going to be slick bars and restaurants from now on till the economy collapsed, and only then would a brand new political idea be formed.

On Bothwell Street, Henry watched the workers coming and going out of their offices; for a moment it really was as if the centre of the modern world was right here in the middle of Glasgow. The young artist muttered to himself, as he walked along the city centre street, "Heaven help us?"

With every step back towards the city centre Henry felt his heart harden, and even if he had to spend the rest of his life on the dole for his art - then so be it. He looked at Sandy, then he shouted out loud, "Down with the uncaring enterprising culture!"

Opposite Central Station, the young artist - as if understanding the strange ways of modern man - put his arm round Sandy Squirrel. Sandy may have been in tune with the new culture, but Henry noticed that his friend looked sad and forlorn, because of the lack of interest in art in the city. The young artist said to his friend, "Truth is more important than any material substance, Squirrel. The ruling culture will always flatter to deceive, I'm not bothered about getting my book out." Then the

young artist looked around him at the people going by, and with a smile he quoted another art axiom to his friend the male model: "Art is voluntary and the world is beautiful and serene."

Sandy looked away from the young artist's eyes; he stared way out into the distance, way beyond the silver sunshine clouds that seemed to be hiding a golden early summer sun from them. The handsome model man's face, at that moment, gave the impression that his mind was thinking about the world, and all the mean things in it that try and stop you from making your mark in life.

Henry cheered his friend up by imitating the depressing voice of the dreamless man from the enterprising agency again, "Oh, I don't know is there anyone interested in art these days."

Sandy laughed and came out of his depression and, when they got across the road and stood at the corner of Union Street, the male model said in his usual way, "Right, Henry, I'm going to pop up to the agency and see if there's any work there for me - see you later."

Henry thought he would go into the centre of town for a coffee, and read a paper and watch life go by - just like he had seen the Italians do, in Rimini and Lido de Jesolo, when he had been there. Not far from the Stirling's Library in Royal Exchange Square, Henry bumped into Bob, a Christian friend. One time in a cafe bar the young artist had witnessed Bob's head shine like silver with the sign of the cross. And this recollection, as he walked towards his friend, made the young artist happy. Miraculously, joyous thoughts appeared and danced inside his mind: "No clouds can cover the truth. Life is worth living. Peace love and joy are everywhere in this uncertain world."

Henry greeted his friend and sat down beside him outside the tea room opposite the library, in Royal Exchange Square, and as the daytime workers and shoppers walked by here and there, the two men chatted. Bob had just met a writer who was having some difficulties with a publisher in London, Bob looked at the waitress and, after telling the young artist that she was the daughter of the owner, he said, "The writer told me that the woman in charge of

the publishing office in London told him that they were only into high concept epic fantasy at the moment,” then Bob laughed.

In fact, the two men shared many jokes and, after the young artist had told Bob all about the manic-depressive man in the new Enterprise Agency, Bob ordered tea and mineral water, and Henry lit a cigarette. Sitting there Henry tried to understand why people are sometimes unwilling to help their fellow human beings. With anger still in his voice he said to his friend, “I tell you Bob I think it must happen when people get into positions of power. They forget everything they have ever learnt. They become unreal. Life for them becomes defunct. Life for them ceases to be something changeable: ‘keep your head down and let someone else say the wrong thing; just sit there and ignore the poor, the out of work, and the destitute. Better to die rich than poor,’ is the bizarre idea.”

Bob and Henry talked for a while and they laughed at the way humans behave when they get, an office, a title, and a desk. The young artist, as they chatted, noticed that Bob, like John Constable the painter, looked for beauty in everything: for when a young lady who had a badly disfigured face walked by the cafe, the young artist noticed Bob’s eyes search for goodness and truth in her, and ignore everything else. Henry looked at the tall thin woman and wondered how the man beside him could pass by the unusual things of this world, and be overpowered by the spirit of truth and glory. But it happened, and Henry Bowers smiled showing Bob that he understood him.

As he sat there the young artist started to think deeply about the spiritual and material world in this wonderful universe. And as he watched some more people walk by the cafe bar, he said to his friend, Bob, “How can it be? How can angels drop in all over the universe and sprinkle us with love, power and glory? How can it be? How can humans have the mark of the creator on them? Yes, and how do all the large and small objects around us reflect themselves inside us? And how do we gain the knowledge to understand it all: buildings, banks, paperweights, and pens? How can it be? How does this wonderful creative spirit move? And somehow man takes it all in his stride, and yet when he goes too

far - at times lost in his own world - something makes him tired and lonely, and if he does not run back quickly to the real world of beauty and kindness to lend a hand, vanity will destroy him. How can it be?"

Bob laughed at the young artist, and nodded his head "It's true, it's the only thing guaranteed in life."

Henry thought long and hard about the spirit world, and when his friend Bob told him about miracles and visions that he had seen, Henry believed him. The young artist felt the chains of life disappear when he heard his friend say: "Everything is given to you - you can achieve nothing on your own."

The two men agreed about the world they lived in, and they felt at ease in each other's company and tried to help each other. The young artist loved talking to Bob, and when they met, Bob always said to Henry, "When you're down, just think about all the wonderful things in this life, that are going to happen to you, the future is a dream come true for you, young man."

Bob, after lifting up his glass of sparkling water, turned to the young artist and seeing that he was in need of some advice, he said to him, "The most important thing to remember is that the love of man comes through the cross, and all around the world the devil looks for workers to pull goodness and truth down - in art, in industry, in fact, everywhere."

The young artist thought about this and replied, "Possession is the devil's friend, and insecurity, hate, greed, lust, and anger, are his allies."

Bob nodded in agreement, then added, "You have two choices in life: to do good, or to do evil; the devil, who works in dark places, is only allowed to succeed by the power in heaven."

Suddenly, in the bright light of truth Henry's sins came upon him, and as he sat there he remembered many obsessions - that he once thought he would have wanted to remember - and many other things that had happened to him. In a silent prayer, Henry asked for forgiveness. The two men talked about life until the early summer sky clouded over and everyone, sitting outside the cafe bar

opposite the library, became self-conscious and went inside, or left to go somewhere else.

Later that night Henry Bowers went to Nico's cafe bar, and there sitting alone at the bar he met two strange females who were influenced by everything American. One of the young ladies at the bar came alive when she heard he was an artist: "Are you really an artist?" she said in a way-out accent. Then they listened to his story.

When he had finished speaking, the young lady turned to her friend, and said, "It's a bad day when the modern world cannot help an artist."

The three of them sat there at the bar at Nico's and talked about life, politics, and of course art, until near closing time. Henry left the cafe bar at half-past eleven. When he got back to his flat he wanted to paint, but the drink had made him lazy, and instead of painting he stayed up late and watched a TV programme called *Whistletest*. Later, however, in the small hours of the morning, when the drink had worn off, the young artist felt angry. To shake this feeling off, he walked outside and spray painted some more art axioms on walls, here and there, over the dull and grey city where he lived. On his way back to his flat, at two o'clock in the morning, Henry sprayed a warning over the front doors of the Enterprise Agency in the city centre:

CITIES WILL FALL BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF INTEREST IN ART

The next day being Saturday, Henry Bowers contacted Sandy and then David the DJ. He told them about an idea he had for a short story he wanted to write on a wall on the outskirts of the city. After he had spoken to Sandy Squirrel, he said to David the DJ on the phone, "It's on the other side of the River Clyde, I think it is called Commerce Street. I want to cheer up the good people in their cars, as they come in from the south side of the city."

His two friends arrived up at the flat just before midday, and they quickly set off in the direction of Commerce Street. Sandy, as they crossed the River Clyde, over the George V Bridge, screamed

when he focused on the target, “Right in the middle of the day, you are going to write a short story on that wall!”

Henry boldly replied, “Yes, sir.”

This worried the male model, and he looked back over towards the city, as if he knew the spirit of judgement dwelled there, inside the buildings and flats that made up the city. He paused, then he said in a dreary tone, “Oh, Henry, you’re off your head.”

The three Art-lovers stopped walking at the corner of Kingston Street, opposite the railway bridge. There they all stared at the red brick wall that ran right along Commerce Street for about fifty yards. Presently, the young artist showed his Art-loving friends the plan he had drawn up on a piece of paper. Henry Bowers, the art director, stared at the wall for a few seconds. Then the young artist looked back towards the city, and as the sun bounced off the buildings, here and there, it seemed to him at that moment that the evil city was solely made up of glass; trying to tempt him into a false kingdom. He cursed the culture and the people who controlled it. Henry then turned back round again and faced his friends, “First of all, the wall has to be split into three sections, everyone will have their own space to draw on. Section one, and section three will be covered with human images, and the middle section will be covered with words.”

Henry, after handing out some spray cans, looked again from the plan to the wall in front of him and, as the busy Saturday afternoon drivers went by him, zoom, zoom, zoom, the young artist uttered to the rhythm of the traffic, “Men, women, and cars, but nothing seems to exist” Then he told the others, “Hopefully the paintings will waken them up before they reach the evil city.”

The young artist delegated the work, “Right, Squirrel, you do the first section: draw features on it relating to sections of the face, then colour them in with blue and green paint. David you do the same here: draw parts of the body, and then spray paint them.” Looking down at the plan he had drawn on a piece of paper, Henry said in a low tone, “And I will write a story in words in the middle section.”

The three Art-lovers quickly went to work. Sandy drew wild eyes and, over to his right, David the DJ drew two large breasts. Henry laughed at their designs, but he soon steadied himself and wrote down the words in the middle section:

EVERYTHING IN LIFE IS A DREAM
AND EVERY DREAM IN LIFE
WILL HAPPEN
SO DON'T STOP
YOU CAN
MAKE
IT

The three Art-Lovers, after they had finished painting, stood back and laughed. Henry grabbed a can of blue paint off Sandy Squirrel, and sprayed a blue eye in the middle of a green ear inside his section. And as the young artist turned round he said to his Art-loving friends in his best Hosea Bowers' voice, "The eye is such a small part of the body, and yet through circles we see everything, and when circles look at circles humans imagine all kinds of things; but I say to you, my Art-loving friends, it is only when you look for beauty will you find the truth, and then you will be happy."

Henry turned round and gave a little bow at a passing car, and David the DJ sprayed another eye inside the Sandy Squirrel section on the wall. Then everyone laughed again.

Sandy and David, for a time, stood there on the pavement looking at the words, and as they stared Henry sprayed a white circle around them on the pavement. Then, as if life existed only as a cosmic drama show, the young artist cracked a joke and proclaimed, "This is our circle, never to be broken!"

The young artist turned towards the cars again - this time they were sitting at the traffic lights - and as he looked at some of the people inside them, he suddenly noticed they were staring out at the words on the wall behind him. Henry shouted at a fat man in a brand new Jensen Interceptor: "Look, remember the words

before the city swallows you up! To live you have to dream, and to dream you have to live!”

Everyone laughed and the madness of the situation made the Art-lovers dance on the Glasgow street over on the far side of the River Clyde. No one seemed to mind and no policeman turned up to jail them, or move them on; however, when a flock of starlings flew into the city, for their night-time procession, it seemed to signal something to the Art-lovers, and they all started to walk away, back towards the city. When they were on the reinforced concrete bridge again, and the River Clyde was under them, Henry Bowers spotted a strange boat, cut in half over a doorway on the other side of the water. Without thinking he read the name of the pub out loud: “Minstrels!” then as a joke, he suggested to the others, “Let’s go in there for a drink.”

Sandy sighed and looked up to the sky until his eye caught sight of the large statue of Amphitrite, on the Clyde Port Authority building, at the corner of Robertson Street. Then he said in a deep condescending tone, “Yes, Henry, I’m thirsty - being an artist is hard work,” and then he looked to the heavens as if to wonder what their next adventure would be like.

Walking over the bridge in the afternoon sunshine made everyone feel good. The young artist looked west in the direction of the Daily Record building. And as the little cars and trucks, on the Kingston Bridge, in front of the national newspaper office, made their way in and out of the city like mechanical ants, the young artist wondered why all the big industries had all but gone from the west of Scotland skyline: “Why are the majority of people now putting their trust in this new enterprise dream? Why are they falling for low inflation, high unemployment, prudent wages, and silent working conditions? It’s going to be a slow death to anyone who does not want to run their own business.”

Henry, as the sun hid behind a cloud, stopped in the middle of the bridge and looked along the river. For a time he watched the water move under the bridge and away from him. However, just when he looked at the shadow under the bridge the sun came out again and sparkled everywhere on the water, and soon

everything was made clean white and new again. Large white clouds were once more upon the water, and so were the reflections of the buildings on the land. The young artist noticed how the movement of the river forced the dark patterns to repeat themselves over and over again until everything on the river was the same as it was in the wonderful sky above. The rhythm of nature seemed ever-changing, as it reflected the bounteous sky above on the water below.

The young artist had once heard that salmon used to swim along the Clyde. Then he thought about how the first city owned ship had sailed from Glasgow to America in 1718. Then he turned to David the DJ, sighed and said, “The city of towers will soon become a city of hotels and bars, and the only jobs left, for the young and old, will be leisure jobs in bars and restaurants. The Scots will soon be like Chinese and Spanish waiters. I tell you it won’t be long till they are transporting people in rickshaws from one end of the city to the other.”

Henry paused, as if to capture the scene, “Somehow everything returns to the Fertile Crescent, where everyone came from; I guess it is only natural that people make their way out around the world and settle here and there. There will always be a few Scots wrapped round a saltire flag lamenting, ‘Scotland’, but the nation will soon be changed forever, and the majority of the faces up here will be foreign and the traditions will be either African, Indian, or European. The Scottish white race, as we know it, will be near extinction in a few generations time; the Scots will end up like the Aborigines.”

Henry thought about some people he had passed in the street: horrible faces, people whom thugs had battered, and who had the scars to prove it. Then he added, “You can laugh, but I tell you it’s true this enterprise culture will soon have the beggars wandering around selling mendicant magazines. You will only survive in this city if you are an enterprising beggar: ‘Buy the latest Mendicant Mag, mister. Oh, sorry to trouble you, but can you give me some money for a cup of tea, eh. Have a nice day.’ ”

David the DJ seemed to sense something from his friend the young artist, and he smiled at him. Then the three men looked down along the river that had in the past brought so much wealth and prosperity to the city. The young artist watched again as the late afternoon sun sprinkled a million diamonds on the River Clyde. And as the seagulls flew here and there above them, looking for food, a feeling of change came over Henry Bowers; it was as if change came from the current of the river, and through the atmosphere it spread itself out onto the dry land.

The Art-lovers soon reached the pub Minstrels and, as Henry pushed the door open, a strange thought crossed his mind: "Soon the tourists will be down here, by the river, and some of the tour guides will be telling them all about how a proud and predominantly white race once worked in heavy industries all along the River Clyde."

The door as it opened made a funny creaking noise, and the young artist looked over his shoulder, for he thought just then he heard a ghostly American voice, somewhere in time, say: "Is that right, shipbuilding was all the rage down here - blimey look at it now."

Inside the bar Henry smiled at the ordinary everyday Glasgow barman, as if informing him about the change that was on its way. Trying to forget what he had been thinking about, the young artist rubbed his hands together, looked here and there, "Right, what will it be, then?" he asked his friends.

David asked for a bottle of Coke, and when Henry looked at Sandy Squirrel, to see what he wanted to drink, he found the male model lost in a time warp. The barman looked at Sandy Squirrel as if he were some sort of alien. Sandy leaned on the old bar, and as he looked away from everyone, he said to himself in a quiet, almost mystical, voice, "This place is unbelievable."

Henry wondered to himself, "Maybe somehow something in life captures time and hides it from you. Then it reveals it to you when you are ready to understand it."

David the DJ noticed some of the old men opposite the bar, who were sitting down playing dominoes, look up at the male

model. The DJ hurried up the male model by saying to him in an impertinent tone, "Come on, Squirrel, stop fannying around."

Henry Bowers ordered the drinks and, as David the DJ looked at him, the young artist cracked a joke, "There's not many punks or New Romantics in here, is there?"

Henry laughed at his own joke and, as he sat down on a stool at the bar beside his friends, he noticed for the first time a young couple standing behind him. Suddenly, out of the blue the young man - who looked a few years younger than Henry - walked up to him, and said to the young artist in an abrupt voice, "That's my stool!"

Henry looked at the young man with the short hair and plain dark suit; he felt the cold tone of his voice like an unfriendly echo in his mind. The young artist, as he stood up, noticed the same feeling in the young man's eyes. Henry knew that violent people had usually a short and quick temper. He pulled another spare stool over towards the young man, and said to him in a plain voice, "There you go - have that one, mate."

However, this did not appear to be the solution; for the young man in the plain suit replied in a rigid tone, "It's that one I want," and pointed to the stool in front of Henry."

Henry had come across troublemakers before in the city. They were called Tams, Neds or Bams, by the city people, and the best way to avoid them was to keep clear of them. Looking straight into the cold dark eyes of the stranger, Henry said, "Well, you're not getting it."

The stranger looked at first moonstruck, and then he turned and muttered something to his girlfriend about ephemeral living, dead bodies, and late night stalking that would lead to evil. Silence followed this, and as the tense moments passed, the two men planned their next move. Knowing that he had two friends with him Henry felt it unlikely that the young man would start a fight in the middle of the pub. In the slow seconds that followed, Henry Bowers, the young artist born on the south side of the city in a place called Busby, started to wonder if sin was somehow linked to retribution, and retribution to evil. A casual word by the young

artist made the two men say something to each other, and even though it was not polite the danger seemed to recede after this, and it gave Henry Bowers time to get inside another one of his characters, and act out another scene.

To the stranger, Henry said judiciously, "Listen mate, I'm in court every day of the working week, and there I have to put forward the petitions of people who have, in one way or another, been accused by their fellow citizens of threatening behaviour; and I see and hear things every day that are contrary to good living. And I tell you if it were not for a strong constitution, and a belief in mankind, I would be in a terrible state. Let me tell you why. There is a side to this ugly and unreal world that I do not like; it seems to me that at certain times of the day people, for one reason or another, get so upset over the possession of some material object, or other, that they fight for it. They smash bottles of each other, and they stab each other."

The young artist paused for a moment to look solemnly at the man opposite him. Then, as he looked down at the stool, he said quietly, but firmly, "I hope that I will not be in court on Monday having to make a statement, as regards my movements over the weekend, and moreover have to answer questions about who I thought a bar stool belonged to, in a bar opposite the River Clyde, called Minstrels."

Henry stared at the stranger, and then he gave him a genuine smile from the heart. Henry hoped that the smile would make him reflect and admit to himself that freedom, goodwill, and friendship are the things that make life worth living. The young artist's mind whispered as he stared: "Seek the truth out, and your life shall be fulfilled."

When the young stranger took on board what he had just heard his face fell; he seemed to understand about life and how it can become a living nightmare for the want of some material object or other. The young man muttered something about not really having heard all that much, and then he told the young artist that he was a soldier, a Para, who had been in Northern Ireland recently. The embarrassed young soldier told the young artist

where exactly he had been, and to colour it he spoke about criminals and crazy people who had taken chunks out of each other - all for the sake of fun he said. Henry's father had been a soldier in the Second World War, and the young artist had met many soldiers. When Henry looked at him again, the first image, that he had received of the young man, seemed to confirm something: "Yes, you've got all the signs of a civvy street military man: plain dress, short hair and pride beyond understanding."

The Art-lovers finished their drinks and when they were outside on the street, David the DJ could hardly contain himself, "Wow man, you're unbelievable. I thought the two of you were about to go ahead in there. Then all of a sudden you, the artist, changed into some sort of high flying lawyer and made the soldier look like a saint."

David and Sandy laughed and, as they walked away from the bar, Henry Bowers, the young artist who loved acting, gave thanks: for he knew, as every Art-lover does, that the act is not enough on its own, and that the Glasgow Tams should be avoided at all costs.

Not far from Central Station, Henry bumped into his old art teacher, from a few years ago at college. After introducing him to the DJ, and the male model, Henry listened to the man talk about an exhibition of paintings that he had just been to see in Edinburgh. Pulling a face and making a grimace, Henry's old art teacher, who was only about forty years of age, said as if in pain, "Yes, it was very good - very good indeed," and nodded once or twice, as if wondering where all the ideas came from for modern art.

Henry nearly laughed out loud when he remembered how at art college the man in front of him used to say to the students: "Sometimes, I think there must be a conveyor belt in the sky, over every city in the world, and all the artist has to do is just reach up and take something off it."

The teacher on the corner of Argyle Street chatted to Henry, and his friends, and told them about the Outsiders: a movement who promote artists on the outer edge of society. The young artist, as he listened, remembered how the students at college, after

hearing his aesthetic interpretation on the meaning of modern art, called him the Conveyor Belt Man. One student used to say, “He’s forever taking things from the sky.”

Another reckoned, “He’ll get caught one day, you know, and they will lock him up for good.”

But knowing the man to be serious about his work, Henry thought it not a bad idea, and right there and then, not far from Central Station, he engaged him in a conversation once more about art. Henry said in a natural tone: “Aesthetics are just dreams. There’s no way you can know anything about a material subject, even if it transports you to an ideal world; all we know is that we feel good, and the greater the art the greater the feeling.”

The two men could have stayed there all day on the street talking art, but they both had to push on. Just before he walked away, the art teacher’s parting words to the young artist were, “Oh, by the way, Henry, have you come across the work by the weird and wonderful group, who are spray painting our city with art theorems. They call themselves Art-lovers?”

Henry laughed, then cried, “Any good?”

Everyone smiled as if they understood not only what had been said, but what had been meant. Then the three Art-lovers said goodbye to the teacher, the students had named the Conveyor Belt Man. Henry didn’t fancy heading into the city centre; for it was always packed with shoppers on a Saturday afternoon, so after a brief chat about what they should do, he invited them back to his flat, “Yea, let’s go back and listen to some music, and let the day drift by us. Then tonight we can go night-clubbing once again.”

The DJ thought it a good idea, “Yea, sounds good, let’s do it, man.”

Old John the roadie turned up and knocked on the flat door around five o’clock. To freak him out, David the DJ said, “Let’s all hide, and let the outrageous male model answer the door.”

Sandy Squirrel liked the idea and, when everyone had disappeared, he opened the flat door and screamed at the roadie. Then he added in a low passionate voice, “Yes, I would have

recognised that knock anywhere. Come in my dear, come in, I'm all alone. Come in my dear, come in..."

A few minutes later, when old John the roadie was ready to leave, Henry and David the DJ, dived out of a cupboard and surprised him. After laughing and joking with him things settled down. David the DJ spoke to old John about what was happening in the music world at the moment. Sandy Squirrel chatted to the young artist about the nightclub job in Edinburgh that he had applied for. The magic line that divides the evening from the day seemed to be crossed just as the late evening news came on the TV, at half-past six. All the Art-lovers sat in the front room of the artist's flat and relaxed, and after the news had finished David the DJ, out of the blue, made a suggestion, "Right let's light up the hubble-bubble pipe and shoot the moon."

Although the artist hardly ever puffed the weed he looked over at the DJ and said, "Carry on my friends, feel free, life is for the living, and nothing can stop you here, except the house going on fire, or the boys in blue turning up."

When Sandy Squirrel heard the gurgling sound of the water pipe he screamed with laughter, and now and again he moved up close to old John the roadie and, as he made strange faces at him, the male model for fun tried to pull his beard and rub his bald head. Henry drifted with the conversation as it went in and out of this or that topic, and everyone travelled through time as if in their own glass world, and their strange thoughts all seemed to be resolved as their words journeyed on and on, as if into another time zone. Henry felt that it was as if friendship came and returned from a secret place, and everyone had to be in accordance with some sort of unseen law, or force, to enter and leave it, "Maybe we all return again to some other life, when we are not hear," muttered Henry to himself, as he watched the light fade.

The young artist, after thinking this, seemed to focus on the fake flames of the gas fire in the living room, and he marvelled to himself, "Oh, what I would give for real flames coming off a coal fire. I am sure I would see and hear again the voices of friends in

the past, and I would understand the images flickering back and forth from childhood to me. Yes, I would know the secrets of the universe, once more, just like I did when I was a young lad in my parents house.”

At that moment the letter box rattled, Sandy jumped up off his comfortable chair, and he shouted, “I’ll get it!”

The young artist laughed and said, “If that’s the boys in blue they will never believe that the resident artist has not puffed the hubble-bubble pipe, yet.”

David the DJ told old John a funny story about a friend who went to the nightclub Maestro’s, and as the roadie laughed, Sandy Squirrel opened the flat door. The laughter, however, seemed to die away as an old Art-lover, who had not been up at the flat for a few weeks, walked into the main room of the apartment of the young artist.

David the DJ did not feel like giving her the royal carpet treatment. The DJ, as he sat dreaming on the sofa, said sarcastically, “Oh, it’s Kim the Wonder Kid.” Then he cheekily asked, “How’s the new boyfriend, then?”

Kim’s mouth opened at the audacity of the DJ, and as she sat down on the edge of the red sofa she glanced over at Henry as if to apologise for any hurt his heart was feeling at that moment. Henry, at that moment, did not feel any ill will and he smiled at her as if heaven had just sprinkled friendship around the room as a substitute for erotic love.

David the DJ knew all about young post punk women, and he gave his friend the young artist, Henry Bowers, some advice, “Throw her out of the flat, Bow Wow, get rid of her - she’s just a playgirl.” Sandy screamed at the outrageous comment, and Henry laughed. To deflect any embarrassment the young artist rubbed his right hand against his neck, and when he stood up he asked the visitor in a casual voice, “So what have you been up to, then?”

Kim smiled a nervous smile and, as if life had been non-stop from the moment she had got up this morning, she sighed. As if trying to forget everything that the DJ had just said, she answered the young artist in a singsong voice, “Shopping.”

Sandy Squirrel walked quickly over to the fireplace, and as he tugged at his suit jacket he asked her in a deep manly voice, "Are you still working in the Joe's restaurant in the west end?"

Kim, thankful for a sane word, quickly replied, "Yes."

Sandy Squirrel looked down at the shopping bags that Kim had let fall to the ground. Then he pulled at the sleeve of his Italian suit jacket again. The male model, full of good intentions, said, "Yes, I'll need to go sometime. In fact, I'll take my friend there the next time we go out," and then he looked over at the DJ.

The DJ, on hearing this news, lazily leaned back on to the settee, and raised his eyebrows as if to say, "Who's the friend then, Squirrel," and Sandy Squirrel whooped.

Directly after this, to annoy Kim, the DJ laughed, and full of fun he warned Sandy Squirrel, "You'd better watch out when you go there. They say that - even although it's an expensive place - you can find the odd cockroach crawling about in the kitchen."

Kim would have slapped the DJ if he had been nearer, but instead she got her own back by saying to him in a sharp voice, "I would be surprised to see you there; they are fussy about who they let in."

Henry laughed at the way Kim conveyed the word, 'fussy,' then he asked her if she would like something to drink.

Kim was not sure if she wanted to stay or go. She looked over her right shoulder at the DJ, a few feet away on the settee, then she said, "No, I don't want anything, thanks."

The young artist thought it a good idea to take Kim through to the other room. On the way there he said to her in a casual manner, "Come on, I'll show you my latest painting, that I have titled: Goodbye Holiday."

Kim tried to laugh at the funny title, but she couldn't; instead she smiled, then followed him through to the kitchen-come-studio.

Just before entering the other room they both heard the DJ's voice say: "She is only up here to annoy Henry, and to tell him all about her new wonderful boyfriend and his new wonderful car. He should throw her out the flat."

Henry paused before entering the studio, and thought about saying something like: "Has he got a new car, right enough," to annoy her, but he didn't bother.

Henry picked up the newly framed painting titled: Goodbye Holiday. Someone from the art shop in Bath Street had delivered it that day. The young artist proudly held it against his chest. Kim looked at it, but she seemed to be somewhere else. She smiled, as if forgetting about everything in the room. Then after a moment or two she opened her eyes wide, made a face, and said, "Well, it's different, Henry."

Henry knew that Kim would never orbit near his planet again, but life - he kept on telling himself - is only worth living if love can rise above the need and want of necessity: "You must let all the bad feelings glide away to the forgotten parts of the memory and, once there, you can be reborn again, and once more you can march along the good path of life."

When Kim and Henry arrived back in the main room they were just in time to see Sandy Squirrel dance to a zany pop song playing on the television, *Celebration*, "Oh, Henry you will love this one. My friend Ian, who is training to be a minister, lent me this tape. The music sends me into ecstasy. It makes me wild. It penetrates my whole being."

The outrageous Sandy Squirrel danced round the room again as if he had just jumped out of that old black and white movie. Then he shouted, "Yes, that's what we all need - penetration!" and he screamed again.

David the DJ stood up and, as he laughed, he shouted over to his friend Henry Bowers, "Squirrel has just been showing us the latest new wave dance, that everyone is doing up at Maestros these days!"

Sandy Squirrel loved the attention, and after stretching his hands out he went slowly down towards the floor, then slowly up again, "That's how they do it," he screamed, and then he doubled up as if in pain with laughter.

When he jumped up he started dancing again and, as he danced, he stared at old John the roadie, as if he was going to pull

his beard again whenever he got the chance. Sandy Squirrel teased him by calling him the wild man from Borneo and, as he swayed in front of him, the male model man screamed about wild nights, strange people, and dark clubs he had been to in foreign places, "It's the four seasons all rolled into one, being a gay man, in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-one," he chanted and once more he went down onto his knees, then up again, "Come on, you lot - dance..."

Henry had seen them dance like this, with their long coats on, up at Maestros to the sound of the new electronic music. The young artist marvelled at the way Sandy Squirrel swayed from side to side, went down on his knees, then up again, and once on his feet he started swaying again from side to side - it really was quite a scene. Even though he did not have his long coat on - which made it even more effective - Henry thought it a wonderful sight, and he started clapping, "Well done, Squirrel."

Old John the roadie could hardly contain himself, and he jumped off the settee and cried out, "He's a nutter!"

Sandy Squirrel, full of outrage, and all sorts of passions now, started to do the striptease. However, unknown to him, as he threw off his suit trousers David the DJ, got a hold of them, and threw them out of the window. As everyone laughed the Italian suit trousers slowly drifted down onto the famous street below. Realising what had just happened - as the trousers floated down - Sandy Squirrel ran down the close stairs in his blue and white striped boxer shorts to retrieve them. Everyone, at this point, in the flat ran to the window and watched the trousers sail down and land between the passengers going up and down Sauchiehall Street.

To the Art-lovers, it seemed like slow motion the way the trousers floated along the street. However, not long after they had landed there on the famous street, early evening travellers, who were coming and going along Sauchiehall Street, walked by them as if they had never belonged to anyone. For some reason a lot of the people down on the street, as they passed by, looked up at the sandstone building above them; they saw four heads sticking out of

two windows. The strange new wave faces were all looking left to see if they could catch a glimpse of the incredible Sandy Squirrel, as he came out of the close.

Within a few seconds the male model came out of the building like a greyhound out of the traps. When some of the passers-by caught a glimpse of the male model man, they stopped and stared at him. Sandy the Squirrel in his smart jazzy boxer shorts, for a moment, gazed up and down the famous street for his Italian suit trousers.

The young artist thought it all a great scene, and he drew attention to the male model. Henry opened the window as far as it would go, and he shouted down to the passers-by below, "Watch out there's a mad man running about in his boxer shorts - quick someone telephone the police!"

Although Kim laughed, she felt sorry for her male model friend. Straining to be heard, because of all the laughter, she shouted, "They're over there, Squirrel, just by the kerb!"

A few more early evening faces walking along on the other side of the famous street stopped and looked up at her. The DJ shouted at them to keep clear of the eccentric male model, "Watch out! He has been bitten by a rabid dog - he's off his head!"

When Sandy came back into the artist's flat everyone cheered and clapped. Henry thought the male model had taken the joke well, and he said to him, "Well done, Squirrel, quite a performance, I'll get you a drink."

After this everyone seemed to be in a good mood, and a party atmosphere came upon the Art-lovers once more. David the DJ, however, had to go to work at ten o'clock, and after another smoke, he grabbed some records that he had bought that day from a shop in Union Street called Listen. Then the DJ went over to Maestros to spin the popular wheel of fun once more for the creatures of the night as he called them.

Some weeks later Henry Bowers, David the DJ, and Sandy the Squirrel, all went for something to eat in Rox restaurant. The restaurant was situated downstairs in the Rock Garden bar, Queen Street. The three Art-lovers met there at two o'clock that Sunday afternoon. The restaurant had a different image from the bar: Rox had a contemporary metallic look, and the Art-lovers liked its modern relaxed atmosphere. The three Art-lovers, when they had finished eating their meal, ordered coffee. Then they started to talk about their favourite subject: life.

David the DJ felt that nothing much was happening these days in Glasgow. He said to Henry, "I know that the young people in this city live to dance and drink, and I know they want to forget about their boring lives." Then after a pause, he added brusquely, "But Scottish culture is boring. There's nothing much to do up here except go to the pub, or go shopping. The first chance I get, I'm out of here."

Sandy Squirrel agreed with him, however he thought things may change, and he didn't see himself leaving just yet. He said in a commanding business voice, "There's more trendy bars opening all over the place, and I'm going to take that job in Edinburgh."

David the DJ did not think that the expansion of pubs and clubs would radically change Scottish culture, and he poured scorn and derision on the idea, "Listen, Squirrel, in a hundred years time when it's the year two thousand and eighty one, this city may very well have funky bars and nightclubs on every street; but I tell you it will be still a boring city, and there will probably be only one or two places worth going to."

Henry agreed, "Yes, it doesn't matter, Squirrel, how many trendy bars and nightclubs we have. It all depends on the quality of the product. There will always be entrepreneurs, and punters will always have places to go to - but the majority of people in Glasgow, for some reason do not like radical culture, or have much interest in art."

This subject took a bit of dissecting, and after the present had passed into the unknown realms of the future, another art conversation surfaced and took up their time. The Art-lovers moved on and discussed the difference between fiction and reality.

The young artist, Henry Bowers, thought fiction and reality quite easy to resolve, "Fiction is when you enter inside a wonderful glass world: a place where you can bring together every situation at your will. Reality on the other hand is cold and grey, and leaves no messages anywhere in the world, for lovers, and friends. There are no secrets in reality, or hidden visions. Reality has nothing in it waiting to be discovered. Reality is null and void. Reality has never coloured any century. If you live in the real world, all the time, heaven help you. Art on the other hand makes light of life, fiction and facts. It makes you forget yourself, and it makes you wonder. Art is never unkind. Art is always wonderful and true. And art is always just for you. When you see a work of art what happens is that the image reflects life back to you as if from another world. I call it a glass world. Art-lovers live inside a glass world of fiction. There they can hide from the horrible cold and grey world where bankers and financiers rot, and people hate each other. Think of the mind just like a piece of glass as it throws images up here and there. And when you see these images you reflect upon them, then store them away. I say death to the real world and the people who

profit from it. Art-lovers, no matter what century it is, will always be found roaming around inside the wonderful world of the imagination.”

The DJ wondered about what he had just heard and, as he took a cigarette out of the packet lying on the table in front of him, he nodded, then he said, “So you think, Henry, that life only becomes boring when it will not reinvent itself; it gets stuck in a sort of cold grey atmosphere called reality.”

Henry smiled and replied, “Yes, life should be a cosmic drama full of wonderful cosmic people living life to the full.” The young artist looked down at the table and thought about what he had just said. Then he added, “This new enterprising culture I’m sure is the idea of the bankers and industrialists, it has had little or no input from street culture.”

The three Art-lovers all agreed upon this, then the young artist changed the subject back to realism. He spoke about the world around them, “I am sure you have heard the mundane phrase people use, back to reality.”

Sandy looked away at some pretty boys, in the restaurant, and smiled at them. Then he said quickly in a loud voice, “Yes, Yes.”

Henry added, “Well, I think the unreal and the real must be like competitors: like the balance of perfect health.”

Henry got a bit confused himself, and he started to tap the table with his finger to the Michael Jackson song playing on the tape inside the restaurant. Then the young artist noticed his friends look at each other and, after a second or two, he said to them in a kind voice, “The thing to do my Art-loving friends is see the fiction in the fact, and when it comes to reality the fact that can make the fiction possible. Life is all tangled up, and Art-lovers must somehow paint it back to the people in an interesting way, or else life will die and the materialist will win.”

David the DJ loved this wild talk, and he cried, “Henry Bowers, you’re a wonder!”

Henry smiled at his friends, and just to go way over the top, he gesticulated like a king, as if telling someone to come forward.

Then he added, "Yes, it's true my Art-loving friends painting, or any other art form for that matter, reflects life, and I guess life is full of fiction and fact - and praise the Good Lord the world is full of wonderful art."

The male model shrieked, and David the DJ laughed. Then the DJ said, "You should write a book, and put all your art axioms in it, and tour the world and tell the people all about how to avoid being killed by reality."

Sandy Squirrel agreed, he clicked his tongue twice, and being a handsome male model man, he suggested, "Yes, and with me on the cover, Henry dear, the circulation will go through the roof."

The Art-lovers seldom took alcohol during the day. They preferred to wait till night-time. So it came as no surprise to everyone when Henry signalled to the waiter, an art student who knew Kim, to bring over three more cups of coffee.

Henry and David the DJ smoked, and as they drank their coffee, Sandy kept looking at the pretty boys who kept making noises in the restaurant. They were sitting at the table behind him. David the DJ and Henry loved meeting young ladies at night in the clubs, and it was at times like this that they tried to understand them. The DJ, as he coolly puffed on his cigarette, said, "She came back to my place after the club the other night, and after she finished off all my wine, she said to me, 'I must be dreaming,' then she sat cross-legged in the middle of the floor, and smoked a joint and started reciting some weird eastern religious poetry to me."

Henry laughed and asked, "Have you seen her since?"

David the DJ replied in a detached way, "No, I think she'll be on her way to India by now."

Henry tapped the table again to the music being played in the restaurant, and after singing a verse or two from the song, he said, "Right, Art-lovers, what do you say to another Art attack on this boring city of ours, tonight?"

David the DJ, who had been feeling tired, woke up and exclaimed, "Yes, that's what we want. We want to leave our names all over this city: for one day we will be gone, and a new

generation will be on the scene, and they will have their own art thoughts.”

The look on the DJ’s face made the male model scream with laughter. His laugh sounded like a car coming to an emergency stop, and Sandy Squirrel soon had the whole restaurant looking at him again. The artist inside the male model, Henry felt, could illuminate a new and unusual kind of world just by screaming. Sandy’s world, seemed to the young artist, a wonderful place where logic and reality were banned, where everyone was handsome, like movie stars, and everything had to be in its place, rule number one: everyone had to have fun.

The young artist wondered how his friend the male model would get on in Edinburgh when he went to work there. Henry asked the DJ calmly, “How do you think they will take to our friend the outrageous Sandy Squirrel in Edinburgh?”

The DJ smiled and as he put down his coffee cup, he said in a confident tone, “Oh, he will get on all right - they like public schoolboys through there.”

Thinking about what they should do later that night, Henry suggested, “Right let’s meet around nine o’clock and go to that funky City Limits Bar, in Union Street, then after that, let’s all head back to the flat, grab a few spray cans and hit another target.”

David the DJ thought it a good idea, “Brilliant, I’ll make up some art phrases so that the people will remember me before I go abroad.”

The feeling of leaving ones mark in life made them all feel good. Every generation did it; and the Art-lovers sitting around the table inside Rox, knew there were no privileged eras. They wanted to be remembered for something too. DJ David said in an expectant tone, “People all over the world will soon know about us.”

Henry Bowers the young artist thought for a moment. Then as if grasping the reason for success, he said to the others, “Yes, society holds down inspiration: for it wants to hang on to its old ways as long as it can. But it won’t hold us down, we will triumph

my friends. Yes, I believe, we will break the mould by leaving our art thoughts everywhere.”

The three Art-lovers, for whatever reason, all wanted to do different things in life. Sandy eventually wanted to open his own nightclub, and give people a good time - one that they would never forget. David the DJ felt that time had changed. He said with a huge smile on his good-looking face: “Soon everyone will be making their own records, and where better to go than to the land of la la: America, to do just that.”

With a hopeful look on his face the DJ said to his friend the artist, “And you and I, Henry, will make records and cut a chart hit, and we will go round the country touring the radio and television stations.”

Henry, thinking about the colour of the place where they all lived, said, “Yes, let’s call ourselves, Artists From A Cold And Grey Land.”

David the DJ could see it all coming together, and in typical DJ fashion he introduced an imaginary track as they all sat around the table inside the restaurant: “Just released on the Atlantic Dreams label the latest single: Artists From A Cold And Grey Land; the track is taken from their forthcoming album: Dance Commanders...”

Everyone laughed then went into their pockets, and brought out some money. The Art-lovers divided the bill into three lots, and the money was then placed in a small white saucer so that the waiter could pick it up at his leisure.

City Limits had not long been taken over by a Chinese man, and the word around the town was that he had hired a smart young man from university, who had travelling discos, to make him money. The smart young man had apparently walked into his establishment, and over a drink found himself proposing to the owner that within two weeks, he would have the place full with Glasgow’s up and coming trendy post punk groovy people. And true to his word within two weeks it had become the number one place in the city. Black funk seemed to be what the people wanted to hear. Henry liked some of the stuff, but a lot of it was obscure

and sophisticated. However, he had to admit that it brought the sexes together, whereas post punk music seemed to be seen as more a male than a female thing: hard and uncompromising. White bands like Kraftwerk and AWB, were played in funky bars, but that was about it.

Later that night, Henry Bowers and his friends walked into the funky bar, City Limits. Sandy, as soon as he entered, smiled at some of the people sitting down on the fancy black velvet seats. He could see that they were all drinking cocktails and eating delicious spare ribs. When the male model caught the face of a pretty young man, he beamed at him. The male model after a few moments said to his friend, the young artist, "Yes, it's a good place, some good talent too," and to show that he was happy he clicked his tongue twice.

Many of the young trendy ladies inside City Limits, knew the Maestros DJ, and they chatted to him when he came up to the bar. Some of the young men started laughing at the way Sandy Squirrel was behaving and, as Henry handed his friend his drink, Sandy smiled at them and said "Hello pretty boys," and when he got near to them he started teasing them about their sex lives.

Sandy knew the blond chap's name was Alan, who was standing in a group of three at the bar, but he changed it to suit the occasion, "Are you getting your fair share, Alana," he said, then he screamed and went down on his knees. When he was back on his feet he pulled at the sleeve of his jacket in a familiar gesture. Then he stared at him: "It will fall off you know if you use it too much."

David the DJ filled his cheeks with air to signal outrage, and he looked at the young artist, who was standing next to him, as if to say, "What is he like?"

Just then a chap who worked in the local hi-fi shop in Gordon Street called Arnold turned up and spoke to David the DJ. Arnold, looking at the DJ through little round glasses, told him in a calm voice all about some of the latest developments in the wonderful world of technology. "The inventions will soon be upon us, and at reasonable prices too," said Arnold, "personal cassettes, videodiscs,

portable this, portable that. I tell you it will revolutionise how people listen to music.”

Of course, a discussion then followed about what the implications would be, on a world that could not employ, or feed, all its inhabitants, but could produce wonders way beyond its means. Then a new discussion started about the video recorder, and how discs and tapes would soon overtake records. It was all very exciting this new electronic age; in fact the world at times to the young artist seemed beautiful and unreal - just like the music they played at Maestros. At one point during the discussion the young artist thought the dream came from outer space. Just then he overheard Arnold, saying to the DJ, “They brought all the new technology back with them after they had been to the moon, and now the record companies are investing in it.”

Arnold knew that David the DJ was part of the Art-lovers group that had been spreading the gospel of the new wave culture around the city. And after he had told him about what he had been up to, he laughed and said, “Make sure you give my band, that I am managing, a mention the next time you do an Art attack on the city.”

The DJ nodded his head slowly, then he told Arnold that he would be going abroad soon. David also mentioned to Arnold about the idea he had for a musical venture with his friend the young artist, Henry Bowers. Arnold looked at the young artist through his small round glasses and, after a second or two, he said in a matter of fact voice, “Sounds good,” then after a laugh, he added, “I’ll do the lights and I’ll bring along some exotic substances that will get everyone going.”

Henry, as everyone laughed, looked around the lounge bar. He wondered where all the beautiful faces came from that now inhabited the strange world down stairs in the funky bar called City Limits. The DJ after this formally introduced the young artist to Arnold, saying, “This is the man who is going to set this cold and grey city of ours on fire.”

After a brief chat, David the DJ told Arnold to pop up to the nightclub sometime, “Yea, come up and see me before I go to the states. We will get high.”

Just before going Arnold, as if remembering something, said, “Yea, I hear that the leisure company you work for are going to sell all their nightclubs, and that cinema they have.”

David the DJ smiled and responded, “Yes, things are starting to happen, Arnold, my man,” and he nodded slowly at him.

Arnold laughed and said, “Sounds interesting,” then he said in the fashion of the time, “Right, see you later cats.”

David the DJ turned to his friend, the young artist, and said in an excited tone, “Well, the Art-lovers are certainly getting talked about - soon everyone will know our art thoughts.”

Henry laughed and as his mind wandered to tonight’s target he looked at a silver book of matches, lying on top of the bar. He picked them up, and as he read the words: *City Limits, Where The Beat Love to Meet*, he tried to work out the best time for the next art attack on the city. City Limits had a late licence till midnight Monday to Saturday; however time flew by and it wasn’t long till the DJ was playing the last record on his Citronic turntable deck.

At midnight, in the usual fashion, everyone slowly went up the stairs from the bar, and milled about outside in one of the doorways, at the top end of Union Street. The Art-lovers, however, did not hang around tonight. They were back up at the artist’s flat before half past twelve. Henry, after another late night drink, told them the plan. Standing in the living room the young artist lit a cigarette, then he said in a quiet confident voice, “Right, tonight’s target is the motorway to Edinburgh. We shall give the people who travel to and from the capital, by bus or car, something to think about tomorrow.”

David the DJ right away started writing down some art thoughts onto a piece of paper, that he thought would be appropriate for the passing faces to read, travelling from city to city. He said, with a huge grin on his fair face, “Yea, let’s wake up tomorrow’s travellers with wonderful words.”

Sandy's, handsome face, that always looked as if it had a two-day growth on it, laughed and, as he put a hand through his thinning hair, the male model wandered around the room. He could still not believe what was happening to him. David the DJ took four cans from the stockpile in the cupboard near the door, and he promised his friend Henry Bowers that he would use every last drop of paint, "Yes, we will make an impact on this boring half-asleep culture before it is too late."

Henry picked up three cans of spray paint, and soon the Glasgow Art-lovers were, once again on their way out of the flat to paint words, straight from their hearts, onto walls somewhere in the city, so that their thoughts would be remembered.

That evening Sandy Squirrel had acquired a car from somewhere - he was always driving someone else's car. The male model in a deep manly voice suggested to his friends that he would take them to the appointed spot, "Right, come on then," he sighed, as if talking to little children.

Henry, as they went down the stairs of the close and out into a dark night, said to him, "Okay, but remember, Squirrel, you'll have to drop us right in the middle of the motorway under the city, then come back for us." Smiling at his friend, the young artist added, "We don't want to get lost down there - it is a lonely place, you know."

When they came out of the close, David the DJ looked at the old maroon Rover car, parked on the famous street outside Henry's flat. The DJ laughed and jested, "Are you sure the car will start, Squirrel?"

Henry laughed too and just at that moment when Sandy Squirrel opened the driver's door he remembered the first time he had been in a car with him. The young artist thought to himself, "Squirrel is an unbelievable driver. He drives so fast and talks non-stop - the DJ is in for a real treat."

Just before getting into the car, David the DJ seemed to read the thoughts of the young artist, and he looked at the car and then the male model man. In the back of the old car the young artist looked at his watch, and seeing it to be half past two in the

morning he relaxed. As he shut the car door, he thought to himself, “Everything will be quite quiet, there’s nobody about at this hour on a Sunday night.”

Presently, the car moved off down the late night street, and Henry looked out of the right-hand window. He stared up at a lonely full moon, high above the city, and just before he looked away the young artist noticed that the moon had one solitary night-time cloud to accompany it through part of the night. Henry loved to watch the famous street after dark and, as he sat there in the back of the strange car, he wondered about the city under night lights, and the way things seem to change. Henry loved to dream at night: “The sun has gone from our part of the world, and is now shining on another part of the globe, but I know its beauty will return. And I know that even if it only peeps through dark clouds tomorrow, so long as I catch a glimpse of the light and follow it here and there, as it bounces off buildings and glass, it will be all worthwhile.”

Fixing his artistic eye on the night-time scene, while thinking of day, Henry said to David the DJ, “Look at all those fabulous neon colours coming from the shops and offices and street lamps. And can you see how the moonlight secretly shines too here and there, and how it illuminates strange shadows, shapes and forms?”

Sandy laughed, and the DJ nodded, then the artist said, “Yes, we are living in a technological age that tries hard to colour the planet with unreal illuminations.”

Sandy changed gear and looked round, then Henry added profoundly, “This city is changing faster than it has ever changed before, but as the bright lights flicker modern man wanders about aimlessly. He searches for the truth in what has been man-made, but he forgets that nature has her own way of creating magic from the stars and from the planets.”

Just then the three Art-lovers gazed out onto the famous street through glass, as if understanding why magical thoughts turn to words late at night, and why men want their names to be remembered. Henry Bowers said in his best Hosea Bowers voice, “But cities only reveal so much to us, and the rest is hidden - never

to be told. This city has secrets just like any other city, and the people who hide behind their walls at night are just like people from other cities. They don't know very much about this life. They just live from day to day, from hour to hour, from minute to minute, from second to second. The good people hope and pray for love and security: for evil is everywhere in this transient world."

Sandy screamed at the way Henry spoke, and the crazy night made him drive fast. Then just when it seemed impossible to stop, he jammed on the brakes, as the traffic lights suddenly changed from green to amber, then to red, at the far end of Sauchiehall Street. The young artist in the back of the car held onto the seat in front of him as the car screeched to a halt. Sandy Squirrel turned round to look at the young artist to see if he was all right and, after laughing, he said in a very deep manly voice, "Sorry, Henry."

The male model then looked over at the DJ, who was in the front seat beside him, and he smiled one of his funny smiles at him. The DJ did not see the joke, and he shouted in an angry voice, "Right, Squirrel, keep your eyes on the road - stop fannyng about!"

When the car got going again, Henry looked at the pubs and shops on the left-hand side of Sauchiehall Street, and he noticed how modern the new Centre Court bar looked, beside all the other established shops. Then the eye of the young artist looked across the road towards the taxi rank where some Chinese people, who had just come out of the casino, were standing.

The Art-lovers car soon moved off again and, just before going onto the slip road for Edinburgh, Henry noticed the unfinished flyover at Charing Cross. It looked so odd. For some peculiar reason the builders had stopped work on it, and the flyover looked as if it had nowhere to go. Then all of a sudden they were down below the city streets, and Sandy Squirrel, somewhere under the city, stopped the car, and Henry and David the DJ jumped out quickly.

Henry, before slamming the door, shouted to Sandy Squirrel, "Right, Squirrel, give us ten minutes, circle the city, and then come back and get us!"

The young artist thought that the car sped off as if running away from an unfriendly world, and as the little night-time cloud, high in the early summer sky above him moved away from the lonely moon, Henry watched it drift as if time itself was pulling it towards another night-time scene. David the DJ ran across the road towards the south side exit, and Henry Bowers quickly went to work on the right-hand wall. The wall appeared tall and it seemed to run forever as if all the way to Edinburgh and back again. The young artist sprayed in huge letters:

LOVERS OF CONCRETE STRIPS
THE EARTH IS NOT AMUSED

This seemed to take ages, and when he got to the last word the silent night-time motorway was suddenly disturbed by the sound of a car, way off in the distance. Headlights appeared on the south side horizon, and when the car eventually passed by him, the young artist stared at a young executive woman inside it. The young executive, he felt, was cutting through the night as if part of a brand new force, “Very enterprising indeed, young lady,” he said out loud to himself, as the car flew by him. Henry at that moment noticed her head suddenly turn and her eyes read the writing, under the motorway lights, that had just been spray painted on the left-hand side of the wall. The Art-lover waved at her and watched the maroon metallic car head in the direction of Edinburgh. Then he turned round, and underneath the first art slogan Henry sprayed another art axiom:

YOUR CHILDREN WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU
IF YOU LEAVE THEM NO ART

David the DJ, on the other side, sprayed:

LISTEN TO THE MUSIC IN YOUR CAR
IT’S TELLING YOU TO STOP
AND LOVE SOMEONE

Both men drew the Art-lovers sign under their words, and then David ran across the road towards Henry. As he ran, David shouted something to the young artist about morning drivers trying to puzzle out art theorems before reaching their offices tomorrow. Henry looked over at him, and observed how his voice

carried itself right down the motorway as if off into another world. Then suddenly out of the dark night the Sandy Squirrel mobile appeared on the south side horizon. The male model flashed the lights of his borrowed car, and in no time at all it screeched to a halt. In a mad panic, the male model man opened the passenger door, and shouted, “Come on you two, hurry up, get in!”

The city highways, motorways, and byways, the following Sunday morning, particularly at the far end of Sauchiehall Street, near to the Art Deco skyscraper hotel The Beresford, all seemed quiet and serene. Many people had left their cars somewhere near Charing Cross, and were now going for a Sunday stroll around the shops and restaurants. The majority of them seemed to be heading in the direction of the precinct where people had already started trading on the Sabbath day.

Henry Bowers got up early that morning and the young artist after a hearty breakfast decided to go to the art gallery and look at one or two famous paintings. On his way to the gallery the young artist stopped walking at the bottom end of Sauchiehall Street, and he became fascinated by the revolutionaries standing at Speakers Corner. Henry stood and wondered for a time about the role of the revolutionary in the new modern enterprising era.

Just then, a thick set red-faced man, with black curly hair, wet with gel, dressed in a black leather jacket, shouted to one or two people in front of him: "Brothers and sisters hear my words, nine million on the dole throughout Europe - economic uncertainty everywhere! Come and join us! Fight against the Tory cuts! Back

the Unions! Don't let the Media moguls away with it! Sack Thatcher! Sign here brothers and sisters! It's time for Revolution!"

For some reason, the young artist as he stood there felt that time - ever changing time - must for some odd reason always be in conflict with some other time, and man, proud man, must stand there on street corners and shout about it. This man had no doubt thought about the reason why he stood at Speakers Corner every Sunday, and why he shouted against people who he said were keeping the workers down: "No jobs for 3 out of 4 pupils! An arms race that no one can win! Money going up on a space shuttle! The idle rich drinking champagne and snorting cocaine, and you and me paying for it! Brothers and sisters start fighting back! Join the Workers Revolution!"

The young artist listened to him for a time, and he couldn't help but think about the word revolution: "What does it mean? People talk about it all the time. You hear it everywhere. The day is coming; change is on its way: revolution in art, revolution in industry, revolution in sport, revolution in politics. In fact, I bet there has never been a time since the fall of the Bastille when man has not stood up against society, and shouted the word revolution! I guess there must be two sorts of change when it does come. It either happens naturally, and people hardly notice a thing, or else there is a dramatic change: the ground is torn up. And as the wheel of fortune and fate spins round and round, the prophets of the day tell the people who will win and who will lose. I bet some people go over to the other side. It can happen without anyone feeling a thing, then suddenly one day someone notices the fundamental change, and they stare into space. And when someone tells them all about the new vibrant force that is sweeping the country - it may well be a political idea, a fashion, or a fad - they say, 'No, is that right.' And the things that people thought would be here forever have all but gone in name and form. And the only thing that remains is a few words here and there in books and magazines, so that the human race can try to understand the transformation, and the word: revolution. What a world!" cried the young artist's soul.

Henry's uncle on his mother's side had been a revolutionary. His mother had once told Henry: "He would have been all right if he had just joined the Labour party."

The young artist remembered thinking, "Yea, they certainly are not revolutionary - that's for sure."

Just at that moment, a young man in a long dark coat, beside the speaker, held up a placard, that read: Back the Unions and shouted, "It's time to fight comrades, if you don't all your shares in your state industries will soon be in private hands, and casual work in the catering trade will be the only thing left for you. You will be made to serve the rich till you die!"

Henry listened to him and wondered again, "What is it that makes a man shout for action against the ruling class system. Is it the fear of everyone going in the same direction and ultimately the death of the individual? Surely if the truth were in the hands of say one movement: the capitalists, then everybody would bow down to the dominance of private ownership, and kiss the ghastly coin, and the world would be a terrible place. No, the truth must lie in many opinions."

The main speaker stopped for a moment, as if to listen to the young man beside him, then after a moment or two he shouted in harmony with him: "Brothers and sisters when too much power falls into the wrong hands it is time to fight! And when too many papers are run by foreign billionaires they start to control the minds of millions, I tell you it's time to fight brothers and sisters! Down with the industrial magnets! I tell you brothers and sisters it's time to fight!"

The strange underground movement, who appear at certain times of the day on street corners - only to disappear again - caught the imagination of the young artist, "Yes, we certainly need them," he thought to himself.

The young artist smiled at the two socialist workers, and as the man in the black leather jacket looked over at him, he heard his mother's voice, somewhere in time and space, say to him something about her brother: "He became a revolutionary, you

know, when he came out of the army; but he looked after my mother, I'll say that for him."

When the meeting closed at Speakers Corner, Henry listened to them sing: *"Arise ye starvelings from your slumbers arise ye criminals of want for reason in revolt now thunders and at last ends the age of cant..."*

Looking towards the west of the city, where his mother was brought up, the young artist felt the magic of life dance along the rooftops, as if trying to catch the eye of any good person going by. It seemed to want to tell them something about the past as well as the future, "Yes, life seems to have away of living itself out in advance of our very own thoughts: for when we least expect something to happen, it just appears and happens. Somehow, as we go through this wonderful life together, people, jobs, faces and places all connect and something moves us."

As the young artist walked towards the west end of the city, where the Art Gallery was situated, he thought to himself, "Isn't life funny, just the other day my mother was telling me about her brother, and here am I today standing listening to the Internationale with a few comrades at Speakers Corner, who are selling and promoting revolution in the UK". Trying to figure out life and how things just seem to happen the young artist said to himself, "If life were a canvas and I were commissioned to paint a picture of it, to reveal to scholars what it was all about, I would paint a man in front of books. And with every brush stroke I would trace his destiny here and there, and his face would be full of joy, passion, tragedy, and yes, revolution."

His crazy thoughts not only gave the artist an idea for a painting, but another art axiom came into his mind:

ART TRACES LIFE AND AFFIRMS LOVE

The destiny of man seemed to make the young artist forget all about where he was going; however after looking along the road that would take him to the west end of the city, he felt sad: for he had to admit to himself that no one is free - not even the revolutionary. Just at Benson's Bar, halfway down the street, a melancholy atmosphere came over Henry Bowers. Henry stopped walking and he looked through the railings in at a family sitting

having a picnic in the park. The young artist, at that moment, wished he had a family round him so that he could tell them all about the buildings all over the city, and about the flight of birds, and the movements of people here and there as they travel through life. The young artist would have said to them, “The good path of life is straight and although we do not sometimes know where we are going, and why things happen to us, we feel the force that pulls us on, and we know that love rules the earth, and that is enough.”

At that moment a green corporation bus thundered by, and as its electric brakes angrily hissed at him, the young artist looked at some of the faces downstairs, and he laughed to himself when he focused on a seasick young girl: “Terrible drivers, they should give the passengers sea sickness pills,” then his mind went back to the present, and he smiled at the children who were playing in the park.

Henry arrived at the art gallery just before two o’clock, and he immediately found the Vincent Van Gogh portrait of Alexander Reid. The young artist stared lost for a time inside glass. He marvelled at the way the brush strokes made up a face: “Yes, life has touched a face before breaking off into a circle of colour,” he muttered to himself.

The young artist looked at the painting for a while, but he became aware of a terrible feeling inside him, as if he were an art thief. He looked away and wondered about form and about colour; but when he looked back at the painting the understanding of an artist in trouble came through the glass at him, as if to remind the young artist of reality. Henry sighed to himself, “Poor Vincent.”

The perceived world of no hope, no destiny, no future, no love, somehow gave colour to a time gone by. Henry thought the painting would give people pleasure for many a year to come, and after one last look at it he moved through to another other room, and to another painting.

The young artist smiled to himself at how fast things can change in this life, for in less than a minute he had transported

himself from modern art to the art of the Renaissance. Henry stopped for a moment at the Master of Moulins: a painting by an artist active around 1480-1500. The strange thing about the walk from the modern section to where Early Renaissance paintings, from France and Italy, were hanging was that there was no change at all in the atmosphere - not for the young artist anyway. It was only when the young artist looked closely at the above mentioned painting that he found himself transported to another time. The breastplate in the centre of the painting Henry noticed had the reflection of the figure in front of it and, as the young artist stared at the white flecks that highlighted the battle chain around the man's neck, he suddenly became aware of a tour guide's voice beside him: "Yes, this is a very interesting painting indeed; I believe at one time it was part of a set of three..."

The young artist noticed a little group of three to his right consisting of two men - probably father and son he thought - and an intellectual young attractive student, who had long dark hair, fashionable framed glasses, and an intense stare. They all stood quite still and listened to the art talk. Soon the little group became transfixed, and followed the portly tour guide's every word, as he took them from one picture to another. The portly tour guide whenever he could made fun of life, and with every step of the way, from the beginning of the story to the end of it, he made art look easy and serious at the same time, "Quite a thing," Henry thought.

The older man in the little group of three nodded, and he held onto his old-fashioned shoulder bag, as if it contained something precious, like one of the paintings in front of him. Presently, he interrupted the speaker. The man asked the tour guide in a confident voice, "Why is this painting not signed?"

The portly tour guide looked at him and, after a nod at the painting in front of him, he said, "Good point." He paused then added in a superior tone, "The important thing I feel here, at this juncture in the history of art, is to understand that the artist was of little importance. You see artists have not always been important people. The artist as superstar comes later with

Michelangelo, and Raphael. What is important here is the painting. The painting represents time and, of course, through the art we get some kind of understanding of what time was like in the days of the Master of Moulins. Yes, the artist later on in history will be seen to be important - but at this point, no.”

The young artist, Henry Bowers, did not like the sound of that; however just then he became aware of the young casually dressed student. He noticed she was looking at him through her expensive dark rimmed glasses. A quick impression told him that the dark-haired tall slim sexy young thing had adventure hidden inside her heart. And when her eyes moved back to the painting on the wall she looked at it as if she was connecting with someone on the other side of time. The young student stared at the Master of Moulins for a few seconds, then she walked over to the next painting. The young artist noticed that the next painting was by Botticelli.

When the young artist moved over to look at this painting he felt a warm sexual feeling inside him, and for some reason it conveyed something to him about travel, and something about places he had never been to. Henry glanced at the young student again and, as she studied the painting in front of her, sense perception told him that the young free spirit was from a good home, and something about the countryside, cars going into town, and tangled up dreams still to be fulfilled. All this left the young artist interested and he wanted to say something to her, so that the feeling of empathy he had in his heart, for one so young and academic, could be fulfilled. Henry smiled at her and then he looked at the painting in front of him.

The portly tour guide said: “Life for the artist does not change, his status may - but not him. The artist, you must understand, still represents life and all its wonder. To understand what the artist is trying to say you have to float around in the magical world of make-believe with him: for it is there, that you get some understanding about beauty, goodness, virtue, and reality.

Henry looked at him and thought, “That’s my glass world you’re talking about Mr,” then he listened to him again.

“And to me the secret of art is understanding freedom, and what the image is trying to say to you. It’s an amazing thing. I believe art brings people together from every generation that has ever been. And true art, in a sense, is when you start to understand the things that lay hold on you, then you are set free. Yes, only through art can you get rid of the negative world that for some reason wants to hold on to you.”

The two men in the little group beside the young artist looked very keenly at the Botticelli, as if trying to assess the words just spoken to them by the portly tour guide. Henry wondered if they were looking for freedom, or looking for clues inside the frame, as to the past or the present. The young artist laughed, and for some reason he thought about his friend Sandy Squirrel; for if the male model had been with him he would have surely screamed and stared at the portly guide: “Outrageous, Henry, don’t you think.”

After a few seconds the younger of the two men asked a question, and as Henry listened to the answer, he wondered to himself: “Sometimes when too many questions are being asked about art, too many distractions take place, and people invariably begin to lose the magic that has willingly surrendered itself to them.”

Henry smiled at the portly tour guide as if to tell him he had enjoyed his art talk, and when the tour guide and the two men moved away, over to the middle of the gallery, it left the young student and the young artist together. They both stared at another painting in front of them. Henry to relax followed the perspective inside the frame through the flame, along the windows and along the doors. After a moment or two he said gently to the young woman beside him, “Do you like it?”

The young lady looked at Henry, then back to the painting, and a kind angel brought the two strangers together. In a broken German-English accent she replied, “Yes, I like it.”

Henry loved to watch people looking at art. In fact, he could sometimes tell more about the person when they looked at a painting than he could do when they looked at him. Time at that point seemed to slow down, and as the two gentlemen wandered

away into another room of the Art Gallery - following the portly tour guide's every word - the young lady spoke to the young artist, Henry Bowers, "There are so many old paintings in here..."

After some polite conversation, concerning other paintings and painters, Henry asked the young lady, "What's your name?"

With a shy almost hidden fear of giving herself away, she put out a hand towards the young artist, and said, "My name is Connie. I am a student, and I am from Hamburg."

Henry wondered if what he had thought about her was also true and, as he looked along sensuous dark eyebrows, he suddenly fell into beautiful dark brown eyes, behind intellectual glasses. He asked her earnestly, "What are you studying?"

Connie did not seem to care. In fact, she almost dismissed the question, "Oh, I'm studying law - but I'm not sure if it's what I want to do."

She had only come through for the day to Glasgow from Edinburgh. Connie added in perfect broken German-English, "My friends are studying there, and I have come to stay with them for the weekend, but I go back tomorrow." Then after looking at the young rustic man in front of her, she said in a soft voice, "What do you do?"

Henry Bowers for some reason looked at the next painting along the line. Then he told her, "I'm an artist."

"Really."

Henry smiled and again he felt her young outlook to life interesting. The young artist thought: "She must take the view that artists are important in today's society - even though most of them are on the dole."

Henry said to her, "Come on, I've got to show you Christ of St John of the Cross, by Salvador Dali," and he indicated with a nod where it could be found in the gallery, and presently they both headed out of the room.

Henry walked outside into the corridor, and fixed his gaze on a huge painting that lay at the far end of the passage. The young artist started to walk towards it and, as they looked at each other,

he kept the conversation going by saying, "They say someone tried to damage it with a knife."

"Someone tried to destroy it!"

Henry smiled at her and to colour the story, he quickly added, "Yes, in this country we have many art anarchists - I'm not sure what you call them in Germany. We call them head cases."

The painting, Christ of St John of the Cross, came at them like a flame in the desert, and after Henry had searched it, he watched the thin figure of the young German girl move up close to it. When she came back and stood beside the young artist again, Henry laughed: for he could see that after looking at the painting the young student had travelled all the way up to heaven and back down again, such was the expression on her face. Then he studied the painting again. And although he had seen it many times before, he wondered aloud about the flying crucifix, the boat, the fishermen, the dawn sky, and how a ruling class had no time for a man who brought eternity to a world without end.

Connie nodded as if to appreciate the artist's talent. Feeling that some words were needed at this stage the young artist asked the young German student, "When do you go back to Edinburgh?"

Connie looked at his face and the rush of someone in a hurry, through a modern world that has just about everything in it for everyone, seemed to overcome her, and for a moment she looked down onto the concrete floor of the gallery. Then she said, "I have to go back tonight, and in the morning I fly to London then to Germany."

Henry wanted to take her out that night, but there was no way she could get back to the capital after midnight by public transport. Connie wondered if she could take a picture of the painting. Henry nodded at her telling her that it would be all right. After a few moments, she brought out a camera from a black leather shoulder bag. Then in no time at all the young German snapped a picture, and in a free and easy tone she said something to him about how she had nearly forgotten to bring her camera along this morning. After the camera had been put back into her

black leather shoulder bag she sighed, as if she had captured the moment she wanted. Then she seemed to forget all about the paintings, the concrete on the floor, and the walls of the gallery around her. Connie brought out a guide book and, as she opened it she looked at a picture of Glasgow Cathedral. In broken English she asked Henry, "Can we go and see this?"

Although, the Cathedral was situated on the other side of the city, Henry smiled, and said, "Yes, of course we can."

Outside the art gallery, the young artist looked up at the red Renaissance building, then naturally he wondered about his new companion. Henry, as they walked on, told Connie something about the man who had designed the building: "They say, you know, he jumped off the roof of the building and killed himself when he found out that he had built it round the wrong way."

Connie as she looked up at the building thought about what she had just heard and, as if seeing the man fall out of the sky and scream something to her about art, the crazy image made her laugh. Henry did not know if the story was true or not, and he didn't care. Feeling happy and content, the young artist looked at all the lines that made up all the windows, on both sides of the road all the way back into town. And as they started to walk away back towards the city centre, he reckoned the buildings somehow presented a vanishing point, right in the middle of Sauchiehall Street.

The young artist and the young German woman, as they walked together, naturally seemed to sense things about each other, and after a few glances at each other Connie noticed the university, that lay behind the art gallery, over on her left-hand side. She quickly went into her black bag, as if the image could somehow disappear, and brought out her camera again. The young German woman pointed the camera at the centre of the high Flemish ventilation tower. Then she snapped another picture.

When they got to the Cathedral it was not the 13th century building that held her; no the young lady's attention was grabbed by the garden cemetery at the back of it. Connie took one look at

the Egyptian and Gothic catacombs, and she said impetuously, "I want to go there."

Henry laughed, and nodded, "Oh, the graves and catacombs are quite a bit away from where we are."

For some reason they had to go the long way round, and when they stood at the wall in front of the necropolis, they both stopped and wondered if they should go closer to where the dead lay. Henry smiled, then he said in an even tone, "Once they were rich and now they are dead - now that's worth taking a picture of, is it not?"

Connie looked at the young artist and after wondering about what he had just said, she smiled as if to agree with him that money, profit, and want for reputation, were strange things in the world at any given time. Then she took a picture of it.

The bold young artist beside her said. "Showing off that you have money is a vain thing, and of little use in this life or the next."

The curious couple stared for a time at the final pomp and ceremony of life - or was it death. Then the two young art-lovers both decided to turn round, and head back to the main road. Although, the city of the dead was still in sight Connie seemed to completely forget about everything around her and she ran on ahead of Henry, and after a second or two she brought her small camera out again from her leather black bag. When she turned round, she shouted, "Henry, smile!"

Connie, before putting the camera away, said in an intimate voice, "Next week, I'm going to show my friends, back in Germany, the young artist I met in Glasgow."

Henry laughed and, as the wind blew open his suit jacket, he shouted back to her, "But some people still won't believe you - such is life!"

Henry marvelled at meeting a friend on a lonely Sunday afternoon and, as they wandered back towards the old Cathedral, he wondered to himself about goodwill, peace and friendship and how things just happen in life, praise the Lord."

Henry wished Connie could stay for the day, and Connie wished she could stay for the day too. They could have went out that night and danced in some fashionable club, and when the streets were quiet they could have returned to the young artist's apartment where they could have enjoyed a love feast till dawn, and secret thoughts between secret hearts could have journeyed on forever. Ah, but alas Connie had to go away. She had to get back to Edinburgh to collect and pack her things, and in the morning travel home to Germany.

Connie, when they stood not far away from the bus station, transferred her thoughts to Henry in a golden glance. Then she kissed the young artist and, as a young German finger gently touched the cheek of the young Scottish artist, she said, "Goodbye."

The young artist, even when the strange Germanic girl had gone, felt good. He couldn't understand it: for he wanted her to stay. Henry jumped on a bus back into the centre of town and returned home, and around midnight he put the final touches to the painting: Goodbye Holiday.

In the small hours when he was lying on the sofa something kept puzzling him. Then he remembered what the portly guide at the Art Gallery had said, and from an innocent deep pool of thought some words came to him: "Art, how strange it is: for it makes people behave out of character. I reckon that when some people see a picture they believe they are being challenged, and they feel they must say something about it - how strange."

Henry lit a cigarette and after letting the match fall into the glass ashtray on the coffee table close by, the young artist tried to understand what happens to people when you show them something new: "That's right you bring the painting towards them, and you say to them: this is my new painting titled, Beach Bum, and they stare at it as if you have upset them. They have in some way been challenged, and they know it - yes how very strange."

Henry thought about faces and paintings for a moment, then his mind mumbled, "It's true, very few people can just enjoy art. In

fact, when I think about it the majority of people are sceptical, as if they may contract some sort of psychological disease from it. Anything new on the scene is foreign. It's a bit like when a new person walks into the room. Most people will be polite, but they will remain sceptical until someone informs them: "He's a poet. He's a waiter. She works as a shop assistant," and there in lies the problem.

More art thoughts followed and as Henry wandered around the studio-come-kitchen he got quite angry and felt for some reason that it was all the fault of the middle class peasants who run the world, and their guardians and ringleaders the rich.

He mumbled to himself: "People who work in the art industry talk about art, but they hate change: for change means winners and losers," and he heard a voice say, "Yes, Mr Bowers, we are doing very nicely at the moment, thanks very much. Why should we change the scene?"

Old Herbert J.Hoffman came to mind, and Henry watched him stroll about his salon. The art dealer muttering to himself, "Yes, it's been a good year, money in the bank, money in the house, money in the brain, money everywhere; I may travel to America, buy some cheap art, and when I get back sell it to some rich friends - yes, it's not a bad old life, I suppose."

Henry felt like shouting: "You fat old whale on a beach, why don't you just!..."

He grabbed two spray cans that were lying on the floor in the studio-come-kitchen, and once again the young artist ran outside into the dark lonely night to spray a few more art axioms over some buildings somewhere. Outside the close, he could see from one end of Sauchiehall Street to the other; the city looked fast asleep. The young artist walked along in the direction of the city centre, and as he walked on thankfully he calmed down. He marvelled at the dark blue sky above the city. The artist as he walked watched the night shadows fall here and there, and as he turned down Union Street he looked at the strange wonderful scaffolding outside a derelict building, at the corner of Renfield Lane. The structure of the scaffolding he thought seemed to make

the building modern, even before the workers could get up it to change the skyline. No cars were on the city roads, and only one or two people passed by him - but no one seemed to notice him. However, when he got to Central Station, he saw out of the corner of his eye a Tam, a short dirty blonde man about twenty coming towards him. The Tam said in an angry drunken voice, "Hey you, what are you doing. Come here I want a word with you!"

Henry kept walking and soon the young Tam lost interest. Henry turned round and looked at him, then he walked on. Thankfully, the space between the young artist and the young man was too great. The young Tam, who looked as if he had lost his drinking mates, shouted after the young artist, "Hey you! Come here, I want a word with you!"

One or two cars went down Union Street towards the River Clyde and, as the young artist watched them go over the bridge, for something to do he counted all the traffic lights, red and green, as far as his eye could see from the river to the south side of the city that would stop them, or let them go. Then he wondered if the night-time scene would make a good painting.

At three in the morning, right in the middle of Buchanan Street precinct, Henry Bowers painted some more art axioms on the concrete, in front of the big department store. First of all he wrote an art poem:

ART WILL MAKE YOUR EYES WONDER
ART IS BEYOND THE IMAGINATION
ART HAS NO MEASURE BUT ART
ART IS A COLON: A COMMA, A DASH -
ART IS FREEDOM AND FREEDOM IS ART

Henry moved across the street to the entrance of the Argyle Arcade and, after a quick look inside the earliest shopping arcade in Scotland, he spray painted the jewellery shop window with another art axiom:

COLOURS ARE THICK COLOURS ARE FINE
COLOURS ARE EVERYWHERE STRAIGHT AND
LINED

Henry Bowers, the following day, got up early and worked on another painting that he had titled: Hedgerow, after painting in the blue sky and boxes for shapes of buildings, the young artist picked up a large brush and painted a strip of yellow right across the canvas. Then he added blue, pink, red, and green dots for the flowers. When he had finished the painting, Henry looked at the round wooden clock on the wall and, seeing it was just past one o'clock, he said with a smile to himself, "I think I'll stroll down to the precinct and see what the people are saying about the words I painted last night."

Henry wore an unusual suit that day that he had designed himself. In fact, one young office lady sitting in the shade, at the corner of Gordon Street, outside Lizards camera shop, noticed this. She glanced at the tall slim figure dressed in the Chairman Mao suit, as he walked by her. Then she said to her friend, "He must be part of some Arts Festival, or some new wave group - pretty weird anyway."

Her friend looked at the young artist, then up at the three late Georgian buildings that ran towards Gordon Street. After she had puffed on her cigarette, she stared down towards the crowd opposite the department store, "Yes, it must be something like that," she agreed.

Every day of the week Buchanan Street seemed to have people moving in every direction, up and down they went, back and forward, like some crazy modern waltz. Henry as he walked on looked at all the faces going up and down Buchanan Street. The young artist then gazed at the canted bays, the arched recesses, and the cast iron mullioned windows, on the left-hand side of the street. The young artist for a moment tried to imagine what it must have been like when it was full of Palladian mansions and merchants' buildings. He then looked at a few modern faces, who were reading his art axioms, in the middle of the precinct. After a few minutes, he made his way down towards the arcade, and once there he joined a group of people who were standing looking at the writing outside the department store.

Henry Bowers loved to watch people's faces when they looked at his art axioms. The young artist sometimes wondered how far they went with them before cutting off and running back to the safety of the real world: "Oh, what does it all mean?"

The young artist wanted to shout at them: "Keep running! Don't stop! Don't let the boring world get to you! Leave me a note somewhere! Write it on a wall - I'll find it!"

As he stood there beside the shoppers and business people in the middle of Buchanan Street, the young artist Henry Bowers hoped and prayed his art words would help them: "For it's not art if it's not exultation," he reminded himself.

After this the young artist walked a few paces and sat down on one of the benches in the middle of the precinct. And once seated, he thought to himself, "All the lonely people. They come to work. They go home. They watch foreign faces go passed them. They see things. They understand life. They don't understand life. And somehow life captivates them. Somehow life captures them. The day is set out for them, and when the day is over they all jump in their metallic cars and head home, and the only consolation they have is that life is the same for everyone: for, I'm sure they believe that life is something constant, fixed, tangible, and earthbound."

The microcosm of life set in front of the artist's eyes told the young Henry Bowers all he wanted to know about the destiny of man: "I feel their wants, their needs, their expectations, and I follow their movements; and as the world spins on through the boundless universe destiny somehow pulls us all together, then pulls us apart. I feel their loneliness. I feel their wants. I feel their needs. I feel all the things that are against the young and the old, day in, day out. And I believe it is the function of the artist to tell their story in paint, or any other medium for that matter. Yes, an artist must reflect life back to them so that they can dream about it."

A man in a Harris tweed jacket and black beret, sitting not far from the corner of Royal Exchange Square, was calmly playing a classical guitar, and as the notes spread out around the precinct

and into the ears of the passing faces, the young artist dreamed away with the music so as not to be unhappy: “Don’t let the city smash your glass world, Henry, go with the colourful sights and sounds of the city, and drift away...”

After about 15 minutes, Henry got up from the bench in the middle of the precinct and, as he passed the guitarist, he slowly dropped a silver coin into his black guitar case. The guitarist watched the young artist through two erudite small eyes as if he was thinking the same thoughts as the notes he was playing.

Across the road, at the corner of Gordon Street, halfway up Buchanan Street, a group of young vagabonds had gathered: a new underclass in old clothes. They were talking about how they were going to feed themselves, some of them had ideas, but the majority of them had none. At one time in history beggars were seen as the casualties of war, now they seemed important economic slaves. One of the vagabonds had heard about some scam going on somewhere in the city centre. Another knew about a favourable position where to beg. They chatted for a few minutes, then a leader emerged. After a time they all seemed to accept his view, and they moved off in search of money to keep them alive.

The young artist, as he walked towards them, marvelled to himself, “Is it possible that on every main street in the world at certain times of the day vagabonds, who have been forgotten about by society, come out and mix with the jobholders; and there they stand for a time in amongst the community. The winners and losers made to face each other on the richest street in town: for as sure as planets go round the sun, and city planners plan streets, nothing is hidden for long in this crazy mixed up world.”

On the busy street, a couple who owned a property company, on the south side of Glasgow, spotted Henry Bowers, the young artist, walking up Buchanan Street, and they stopped him. At first, they looked at him as if not knowing what to say. Henry smiled at the man; for he knew it was his style to build himself up with swear words when his wife was not there. The man said in a thin,

but firm, voice, "I hope that's not your work they're all looking at, outside the department store, down there."

Henry laughed then looked over his left shoulder to where some people were reading the words outside the arcade; however before he could think up an answer the woman asked him in a serious tone, "When is your first painting exhibition going to be held?"

Henry Bowers told her all the news about how he was trying to get Fashion Squares, the exhibition, ready for the end of the year. The middle-aged woman looked at him as if to figure out the strange young man in the strange blue Chairman Mao suit and blue cord shoes in front of her. The property woman wanted to say something else, but her husband noticed something happening in the crowd, and interrupted her. He said in a comic voice, "Here comes the cavalry."

Just then, two cleaners in dark red boiler suits, carrying brushes and pails, came rushing down Buchanan Street like two comedians, late for a gang show, and after reading the writing on the pavement outside the department store they tried to erase it. Henry watched them over the man's shoulder, as he listened to the voice of the property woman. She was now talking to her husband about, people, places, and restaurants, in the new enterprising city of Glasgow. Her husband, however, interrupted her saying, "Nutcases I would put them all in jail - that's what I would do. I would feed them raw meat through a cage."

The young artist said to himself, "Ah, well there goes my art thoughts for another day. I hope the good people read them before they were blotted out."

The property woman ignored her husband and started talking about her daughter, who she said had just turned nineteen and kept her up-to-date with everything new. She said with a smile, "They call them new wave artists, you know," then she made a face at the young artist, that he thought was borrowed from her daughter, "although no one knows what they do for a living," she added in a matter of fact way.

Her husband did not care, “They should put them all in the army - that would soon sort them out,” then after a long pause, he sighed as if yielding up to goodness, “I don’t know what’s wrong with the young generation. If you ask me young folk have got too much time on their hands these days.”

The young artist said goodbye to the property couple, and as he walked along the precinct he half-closed his eyes and felt the warm afternoon sun on his face. His crazy thoughts seemed to dance around inside him and not really say very much to him, then suddenly Henry thought about the consequences; for up until this point in time it had never really hit him. Somewhere a judge sitting in a dark courtroom declared: “Henry Bowers you have painted this city, day in day out, with art axioms, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage; I therefore sentence you to...”

Out of the vision a voice came as if to rescue him, “Henry!”

The young artist laughed at seeing the face of the DJ in front of him, “I’m sorry, David, I was miles away, wondering what would become of me, and my art.”

Henry instantly forgot all about the courtroom scene, and shook the hand of his friend David the DJ, “How are you doing?”

The two Art-lovers decided to walk back down Buchanan Street; for the DJ wanted to read the art axioms, outside the grand department store and the arcade, before they were completely erased. After reading what was left of them the two men turned onto Argyle Street, and for a moment they watched the thronging crowds move up and down the amazing dynamic street. On the opposite side, outside Arnotts Department store, coming through the crowd of afternoon shoppers, Henry Bowers spotted his old art teacher, and he whispered to David the DJ, “Look, it’s the Conveyor Belt Man.”

The DJ laughed and as Henry watched his old art teacher walk by, on the other side of the street, the young artist turned round to face his friend the DJ. Henry slowly put his hand up towards the sky, and picked something off the invisible conveyor belt that runs over every city in the world. For a time the young

artist hid the message inside a clenched fist. Then he opened his hand and, as if from a piece of paper, he read out loud another art axiom:

ART ILLUSION LIFE

Not far behind the Conveyor Belt Man on the busy street, the DJ spotted the handsome figure of Sandy Squirrel; he too was making his way through the busy shoppers. Sandy Squirrel was going so fast, that it made Henry wonder if he had left the cooker on at home, and was trying to get there before the house went up in flames - such was the speed of Sandy the Squirrel. David the DJ shouted over at him, but he could see that the Squirrel had fixed his thoughts on making some appointment, or other, and he had little chance of connecting with him.

Charlie Parkers bar that night had a party on, celebrating life in the fast lane, and everyone seemed to be there; for some bizarre reason the chic clientele all seemed to arrive at the same time, around ten o'clock. Kim turned up with her new boyfriend Richard, and two French friends: one male, a photographer, and one female a teacher. As they stood at the bar the male friend, a horrible type, cursed the world from post to pillar till it was black and blue. The female friend, however, did not say very much. She closely watched Kim and her new boyfriend, and sometimes when he was not listening she would offer her young post punk friend a word or two on how to manipulate him. Kim took her ideas seriously.

For some reason there were many art students in Parkers tonight, and this broke new ground: for Charlie Parkers had always been a place for the movers and shakers of Glasgow. However, the new wave post punk generation was up and running, and they were all looking for new things to do. The older generation had just about got over punk rock, and were now ready to accept this tame fashion into the market place: "Yes, new wave could be big business, so long as it throws off its street cred, and does not believe in anything other than a monetarist economy," was basically the market view, and what was being said by some of the trendy economists inside the funky bar.

At the bar inside Charlie Parkers an art student named Fraser who had dyed his hair orange was beginning to acquiesce. He was speaking to his boyfriend, a part time student and waiter who was dressed up like Humphrey Bogart. Fraser was telling him: "Art is just a great game for making money. Look at those old squares over at the end of the bar. They have been doing it for years," and the two of them sneered at the old fogies.

Henry thought their conversation strange and it made him wonder about the new Tory government, and what they were saying about the economy: "We will make more millionaires in this country than ever before. They will provide the wealth for everyone. Why not come and join us and become a millionaire? Greed is good, let it trickle down. Greed is good, let it trickle down..."

The young artist, as he stared at the theatrical art students, wondered if they would run with this new fad. Henry laughed at his crazy thoughts: "Money, punks, and old-fashioned short-haired hippies in smart suits. I wonder what will become of the new movement. Will they become a new force to be reckoned with?"

It did seem a strange thing indeed to the young artist that an up and coming culture would create a new fashion only to be overthrown by the old corrupt generation, sometimes referred to in Glasgow as gold-diggers, or posers. The types who went to Charlie Parkers restaurant and bar were certainly funny. They would drive around the city in their fast expensive cars, pop into the bar for a drink, pick up a young lady and the next night do the very same thing.

Henry had heard about the man who owned Charlie Parkers. Apparently, the man worked in newspapers during the day, and at night he worked in the fantastic world of entertainment. Just as he was thinking about him in he came into the bar, and floated around to the delight of the young artist. Judy, Beverly, and Brenda, at that moment, also popped into Parkers. Henry knew them from school, and he liked them. They soon started chatting about fashion and where they all thought they were going in life. The young artist told them all about his paintings, and the hope he

had for Fashion Squares, the exhibition. Judy and Beverly both told Henry that they wanted to leave Glasgow for cities abroad. Judy had already a country in mind, and she had applied for a job there. With a shy beautiful smile she invited the young artist to a special night out, "Will you come to my going away party, Henry?"

Henry laughed and said, "Of course, I will."

The three young ladies soon danced away, and searched for love from different sources in the strange metallic bar. The young artist thought this was precautionary, just in case they never got what they wanted abroad, or in case what was being talked about in the media was credible: that a nuclear bomb could be dropped one day by the Russians somewhere down near the River Clyde, and thereafter travel would be cancelled forever.

Henry Bowers felt very much part of the new culture, but he didn't believe in selling it away. No, he would paint his pictures, and hope that one day it would bring him success, but success had very little to do with money, or the new enterprise culture. Popular art he felt reflected culture back to the people to reassure them about their lives, but popular art had very little to do with being remembered. Henry felt that the success of pop art lay in the knowledge that it knew it would never be remembered: one day it would just fade away, and the fascinating thing was that contemporary people, who had no other interests, would do the same thing. His art would be of the time and have the feeling of the time in it. Many people felt at this point that art could not fully develop, because technology was taking over the world: television images, video pictures etc. It was called Photo-Realism.

The young artist felt that someone in the media, in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-one, must have put it about that the world was bankrupt, and that the only hope was to join the new enterprising movement. Certainly, the media put it round, on telly every night and radio every day, that the world was a terrible place full of corruption, greed, malpractice, and murder: in short the world had no future, and to survive it you had to give in to the message of the new medium. Henry hated the up and coming culture, but he loved art and that is what kept him going.

David the DJ, after chatting to a few chic females at the bar, thought it a good idea to invite some of them back to his friend's flat and show them some of his paintings. As it happened when Charlie Parkers shut, a few art students including Kim and her new lover, and one or two young women who knew David the DJ from Maestros, came back to the artist's flat in Sauchiehall Street. And there in the kitchen-come-studio Henry Bowers, the young Glasgow artist, gave a sneak preview of some of his paintings from his forthcoming exhibition: Fashion Squares.

Some people were impressed, some people were unimpressed, and some were just happy to be there standing in front of contemporary art made in the time they were living in. Thankfully, when people were asking him questions about his art, Henry had learned to talk and dream about it at the same time.

“What does it all mean?”

“Do you know this person?”

“What is it that makes it look familiar?”

“Where is it?”

Henry, as he listened, felt that the spatial and temporal world lay outside people's imagination, and when they came to examine some representation of life inside his kitchen-come-studio - even if the painting they were looking at did not aesthetically please them - art touched them and that was enough for the young artist. Sometimes some people would look at him, as if they were searching for themselves in the art: something lost, something hidden, something in the past that had once made them feel good. He knew that some people looked to the artist to set them free again. Henry thought about some of the famous artists throughout history, and he felt sad at being under their spell: for he knew beauty and goodness came in the light and everything else fell into place like a well-organised memory: “Such is art,” he marvelled to himself.

Kim, full of wonder, listened to her uncouth French male friend curse the world. She laughed and made faces at Henry, in his kitchen-come-studio, and when caught she said something to her new boyfriend and beamed with delight.

David the DJ poured himself something to drink, and as he put a tape in the music machine that lay beside the kitchen sink, he advised Henry, "You should throw that daft bitch out, Bow Wow." Then he immediately chatted up a sexy young blonde thing in a white dress, who worked in a well-known city centre boutique, "You look like the sort of girl who knows what kind of pictures she likes," said the DJ.

The DJ and the pretty young thing soon found themselves drifting into the secret colours of the night, where lovers meet: a place of passion, of glory, and ecstasy, where pleasure is an essential thing, and where colours are vibrant and glorious - and where anything goes.

In the early hours of the morning the group of about twenty people slowly dispersed leaving Henry with two punk rockers - who had come along with some of the art students, and a young teenage girl who went by the name of Dawn. The punks naturally before leaving stole a half empty bottle of vodka, and Dawn, now all alone, went through to the living room, and once there sat down in the middle of the room, crossed her legs, then lit a funny cigarette. Henry thought he would sit with her till she decided to go. Then he would go to bed.

In a wonderful naive voice, Dawn said to the young artist, "I just luv floating about the scene," and she smiled at him.

Henry didn't think much about it, and he just smiled back. He did however wonder where she came from, and who her friends were. The young teenage girl looked around her, then smiled at him again.

Suddenly, Dawn said in a worried naive voice, "Where have all the art students gone?"

Henry thought the words sounded like the melody for a song, and he smiled at her again.

Dawn did not wait for an answer, for she spotted a French apple in a glass bowl on top of a coffee table in the middle of the dimly lit living room, and she stretched over and took it. Then she sat back down on the dark red carpet, and as she held the apple in her hand she tried out her own philosophy on the young artist, Mr

Henry Bowers, “Do you know that this apple here has been grown just for me,” and just to prove it she took a bite out of the side of it. “You see what I mean.”

Dawn took another bite out of the apple, then handed it to the young artist. Henry took the apple in his hand, then he got up and for some reason, he opened the dark velvet red living room curtains. Dawn with a daft, almost magical, look on her young face, said, “Is it true artist’s can see into the future?”

Henry smiled, then answered diplomatically, “I think we can all see into the future, when life calls upon us to do so.” And after another smile, he added, “Images of our wants and needs, are all there floating around inside us, I guess.”

They sat looking at each other for a time, then Dawn put her fingers inside her hair and said to Henry, “People make up the strangest names for other people. Don’t you think?”

Henry wondered what she meant, “Yes, I guess they do.”

Dawn nodded, “They say you’re this, and you’re that. They make you say things, then they give you a name.”

Dawn liked the sound of her own words, and she looked around the ordinary living room as if following them here and there.

Henry Bowers, playing the game, told her, “Words are free you can give them to who you like. You can change your opinion about them. You can even make up new ones if you don’t like the old ones,” and at that moment the young artist looked around the room, as if he too were following floating words. Then he added, “I have heard it said that words float up into the sky, and are collected into an invisible conveyor belt, then they go round the world; so when you are stuck for an idea all you do is look up and pick one off the invisible conveyor belt.”

Henry pointed to an invisible word, as if it had just floated into his living room from the lonely sky outside, and he grabbed it.

Dawn loved this and as she bent forward she asked him to open his hand: “What does it say?”

The young artist smiled. Slowly opening his fingers he said, “Love is free.”

The young artist, feeling the night drift away into a new morning, picked up his guitar, that was lying against the settee, and he sang a song to the young blonde lady who went by the name of Dawn. When Henry finished singing, he played the key scale, and let all the notes fall back into the chord: just like night does into day. Then he listened for ancient signs and wonders that seemed to be buried in his imagination, and he seemed to lose himself to a new dawn.

Dawn asked Henry, in a tentative voice, “Is it because of Kim you’re sad?”

Henry sighed, then he told her, “Well, I’m not sure what gets me down anymore; I guess when I lose sight of love I tumble.”

Dawn took another puff of her funny cigarette and thought about this. Henry reflected about the night, the people, and the places where he wanted to go. He looked at the young girl, dressed in jeans and a tee shirt, crossed-legged in front of him on the floor, and he laughed. Then he said, “Have you seen the conveyor belt, I need to borrow a word.”

Catching the dream from somewhere the young couple kissed until the morning, then Dawn disappeared around midday.

Two weeks later, early one Saturday morning, David the DJ arrived up at the flat and asked Henry if he could give him a painting to take with him to America. The DJ said proudly, “I will hang it in the main room, and when people come in to see me I will tell them all about my friend the famous Glasgow artist, Mr Henry Bowers.”

Henry gave him the painting titled: The Man the Mirror and the Light Bulb; for he knew he was fond of it. Later on that afternoon around half past three, it came as a real surprise to Henry when David the DJ appeared again up at the flat, this time with Sandy Squirrel. Standing in the hallway Sandy invited the young artist to go over with them to the gallery across the road, and see a new wave exhibition of paintings titled: Life in an Era of Great Change.

In his usual way, David the DJ said with a smile, “Yea, let’s do it - sounds like a good one.”

The young artist, taken aback, quickly grabbed his suit jacket. In high spirits as they headed down the close stairs, he said to them, “Terrific, and when we get there I’ll tell you all about modern art: Futurism, Cubism, Suprematism, Constructivism, Divisionism, and neo-impressionism. You know, I was just reading

about an exhibition, in a magazine, called the Subjective Eye: German neo expressionism is all the rage just now along with Italian art...”

The flat where Henry Bowers stayed was only about 200 yards from the gallery, so it did not take long for them to get there. Inside the gallery, they wandered around for a while and took in the different periods of modern art. However, when they got to a painting titled: Life is a Simple Thing Till You Think About It, Henry, spotted in the middle of the gallery a familiar painting on the faraway wall. The young artist laughed and exclaimed, “What’s that doing there?”

David the DJ took off his big round glasses and, as he rubbed his eyes, he said coolly, “Well, we thought we would just cheer you up, Henry, before we leave you all alone in this cold and grey land.”

Sandy looked at him and searched the artist’s face beside him. Then after screaming he said, “The DJ knows the security man.”

Henry sighed, “I don’t believe it they have hung my painting, The Man the Mirror and the Light Bulb, right in the middle of the exhibition: Life in an Era of Great Change.

David the DJ put his glasses back on, and said, “I’ll get the painting back tonight, then tomorrow I will hang it up on a wall in America,” and as he looked at the young artist beside him, he laughed. “Now, that’s what I call modern art.”

A serene looking woman, at this point, with black hair tied back in a bun, dressed in a green military uniform walked by them. She looked at Sandy the Squirrel, and said coldly, “Quiet please, keep your voice down.”

David the DJ smiled at her and when he looked back at the painting: The Man the Mirror and the Light Bulb, he said, “How did you describe it, again, Henry?”

The young artist laughed when he remembered what he had said to the DJ that morning when he had turned up at his flat. Hearing no reply, David the DJ said to his friend the artist, “Right, let’s get out of here.”

Henry, as they walked away, looked back and - as he thought about some of the modern paintings he had just been to see - he seemed to understand the art of time, and how it has so many surprises up its sleeve.

Just then, two Japanese tourists stopped to look at the painting titled: The Man the Mirror and the Light Bulb. One of them, who had thick bottle glasses on, said in a loud voice, "Ah, Henry Bowers, I have heard of him."

Henry looked at his friends, then he quoted another art axiom to them: "Art is something you can get away with anytime."

The Art-lovers laughed, for they all seemed to understand the precious gift of friendship, and how fun and merriment have a certain time, date and place in people's hearts, and in people's lives. Henry asked, as they walked out of the gallery, "How long has it been hanging up in the exhibition?"

David the DJ smiled, and in a mock Irish accent, he jokingly said: "Well, now let me see, we couldn't put it in the exhibition till the afternoon - after all the arty farts have gone."

Outside on the famous street the DJ winked at a security guard at the entrance to the gallery. Then he said to the young artist, "Right, Henry, the next time you see The Man the Mirror and the Light Bulb, it will be hanging up on a wall in the states."

Sandy screamed and said something about looking forward to the farewell party. Then the DJ said in a professional voice, "Yes, the Stateside Shindig is on tonight."

Henry was looking forward to the party and he said in a happy sad sort of way, "Yea, we will all miss you."

The DJ looked down Sauchiehall Street towards where he worked at night, then he looked at Sandy Squirrel, then at the young artist Henry Bowers. After a theatrical pause David the DJ said, as if understanding Life in an Era of Great Change: "Art-lovers are never apart for, no matter where they are, they connect with each other through the wonderful world of art."

As soon as the young artist got back to the flat the phone rang, and a strange voice said: "Mr Henry Bowers you have to report to the police station in Cowcaddens."

Henry seemed quite calm and he went along to see what it was all about. After waiting in the reception area he was interviewed by an officer in a dark blue police pullover. The young artist as he sat down looked at the man, and he noticed that he had a skin graft on the side of his face round about the temple area. The room was cold and clinical.

The other officer, a young man, that was with him, seemed almost anonymous. Henry thought the officer's manner pleasant, but he detected a ruthless streak in him, especially when he gave the young artist a warning: "I've been told you have been bothering certain members at the local government office."

Henry thought for a moment; he remembered that he had once challenged a stout middle-aged woman there a few months ago. At that moment, he saw her funny polished face, painted up like a curious doll, as if in the room with him. The woman, who waddled as she walked, had annoyed him; for she would not send his letters through to the head office in Edinburgh. The letters were seeking help from the government as regards grants. This was when of course Henry believed in a caring society; he had been trying to get the government to do something to help him. He thought he should not bear the cost of postage, and delivery to put on his exhibition. He had applied for a grant. He felt the local government office in Glasgow should have been able to help him. All this had happened before he had become an art anarchist. No mention was made of anything else, and the young artist sat quite still and listened to the caution.

The officer said, "If you are seen hanging around there again, we have got instructions to lift you - is that clear, Mr Bowers."

Henry wasn't going to be a martyr just because some fat middle-aged doll with a shiny face couldn't be bothered helping her fellow human being. He nodded and said, "Yes," then he was free to go.

Before going to the farewell party that night Henry sat in his favourite chair, and smoked a cigarette. As he looked at the blank television screen, he wondered about lots of things, but most of all

he wondered where in the world he was going in life. One of his Art-loving friends was off to the states; the other one was going through to Edinburgh to work. Time it seemed to the young artist only had brought people together just to pull them apart again. The soul of the new wave movement, enjoyed by everyone, seemed to be drifting into other novel forces, smaller streams duty-bound to weaken the power of the new culture. The young artist could see the dynamic force completely fade away, and be taken over by some squeaky clean enterprise craze.

The words somewhere in the time through a wicked character in his mind seemed to sum things up: "Embrace the new force, do not believe in society, the state, or the community - that's the way things are going to be in the future. This brand new force will be for everyone who does not believe in the old ideal. Don't worry about the beggars, or the paupers - we will have everyone running around selling themselves. Dissidents will be outlawed. The people who are out of work will be a special industry: they will have the state over them, and entrepreneurs living off them. Once the economy gets going there will be no grants for anyone to start up their own business. Modern man must be his own boss, and follow himself until the next era comes along. Remember these words: Enterprise, Wealth Creation, Drive, Ambition. You must think of no one but yourself - society and community no longer exist. All art is unheroic, money is everything."

Henry felt so angry that he wanted to run outside and spray paint his art axioms all over the place, but thankfully he had somewhere to go. When the young artist arrived at the going away party, he could see everyone who was anyone was there, and the atmosphere seemed to have everything in it from love to crazy night time schemes. Henry joined some friends at the bar in Maestros nightclub, and as usual everyone started talking about the future, while rejoicing in the present. The night went well, and the Art-lovers danced till the lights went on. Needless to say, the party went on till daybreak over at the artist's flat across the road from the club.

Henry felt terrible the next day, for he had not been to bed. At half past nine in the morning the young artist, completely spaced-out, got off the settee and he slowly opened the velvet curtains in the living room. The young artist heard the cars going by outside on the famous street. Henry rubbed his face and looked outside. He shuddered as if the noise could kill him.

After staring down onto Sauchiehall Street, Henry got washed and, for something to do, he went to see a woman who had a gallery in the city centre. Henry felt that after a chat with her he could bring some of his paintings down later on that day, "It's worth a try - it may even get rid of my hangover," he said, as he yawned before closing the door to his flat.

No one was in the small gallery when Henry arrived, then suddenly the cleaner appeared from the back shop. The cleaner knew the young artist to look at and, after putting the kettle on, she seemed to understand the mood he was in. Presently, the old woman gave the young artist some advice. She said in a furtive tone, "Oh, America is the place for modern art, no one knows what's modern here."

Henry laughed and then looked at some of the paintings on the wall behind her? "Yea, I know what you mean."

Mrs Welsh had worked as a cleaner in the gallery for quite some time, but she did not understand the paintings they sold there. She picked up her mop, and in all her glory she said: "I like a picture that has got meaning, something colourful, something that cheers me up."

The young artist dressed in a green tweed jacket, black shirt, and red tie - the same clothes he had slept in last night - stood there in a daze. He repeated, "Yea, I know what you mean."

The cleaning lady sighed and after she had looked at him, she started mopping up the floor around him. Mrs Welsh, seeing him to be worn-out, stopped and said, "Are you all right, son?"

Henry rubbed his eyes, then he excused himself, "Yes, I'm fine, my friend had his going away party last night - I didn't get much sleep."

Mrs Welsh, as if she had all the energy in the room, suddenly became animated. After she poured some water from a kettle into a basin, she came up close to the young artist and looked into his bloodshot brown eyes. Mrs Welsh stared at him then, as if transferring the whereabouts of the kingdom. Then, she advised him in a low voice, "Go abroad, Henry, you will never be famous here. Scots people don't like protagonists. They like drunken comedians and witless footballers. People who don't want to change things. You're a revolutionary. Go abroad."

Henry looked at her, and wondered, "Is that what I am."

"Yes, the Scots like harmless people: comics and footballers - not artists," repeated Mrs Welsh.

The woman turned away as if not wanting to be heard. She looked at the door of the shop, and before transforming herself back into her natural boring West of Scotland self, she said, "I may be witless and worn out, but I know what I'm talking about," and she nodded a canny nod at him.

Henry thought for a moment, "Yea, your right Mrs, the only artist that Scotland has ever produced was Rabbie Burns. Then he paused for a moment, then added diplomatically, "I know everyone is going over to the states, but I can't afford to go, for my paintings are not selling here."

The old woman, back to her customary self now, offered the young artist a coffee. Henry took the cup and lit a cigarette and, as he stood waiting for the owner to arrive, he once more tried to figure out life. The owner did not appear and Henry soon left the gallery. He wandered in the direction of West Regent Street, and as he walked he wondered where in the world he was going. It was a crazy thought for up until now he believed something would happen. As he looked at his watch he muttered to himself, "Eleven o'clock, the pubs are open," then he looked right through the city, this time down Union Street, "I wonder where all the people in their cars are going to at this time in the morning. I wonder who they are. I wonder what they do with their wonderful lives."

Just then someone's voice going by said, "I told her that's where we should meet..."

Henry wondered if from now on he would be all alone, wandering around the city, and the only thing that would keep him sane would be a word from passers-by, like he had heard just now. He wondered if he would end up like Caravaggio and kill someone, and then be outlawed from society. His desperate thoughts made him sad and, as he watched the cars go by, he thought about many things, "Look, there they go, the human race is off to work once again, and I have not sold a painting yet."

Henry thought about going for a drink in Nico's at the bottom of Sauchiehall Street, but he decided instead to go for a drink in the funny tennis court bar called Centre Court, "It is such a strange bar - maybe it will cheer me up."

Henry ordered a glass of wine and, as he looked around him, something reminded him that art had a time, place, and reason for coming into existence: "It's no use kicking against the pricks; you must go with the feeling of the time if you don't want to lose. If you create a work of art just be happy, don't feel down when you're not being recognised, say to yourself what is fame anyway, but a curse on your secret self. Famous people are all false; others make it something else. Some people pretend to be happy, for the pretence makes them feel good so they go along with it. Then one day they see the light of truth and they cry out loud, 'I want to be just like everyone else!' What a sham."

The young artist looked round the Centre Court Bar, and as he viewed some of the people, sitting here and there having lunch, he seemed to understand the principle of being reconciled to one's own fate. However, he couldn't help but wonder, "What will become of me?" Will I be famous when I've gone? Will I be thought of as someone who went too far? Will they exile me? Will they try and keep me on the dole for life? I can see this new enterprise culture opening the material floodgates and everyone going for it. They say the Scots are friendly to foreigners, and with the doors opening all over Europe, I can see a time when the nation will be swamped with foreigners. They will welcome them in, 'Yes, come in, good to have you. We are all materialists in Europe now: no state, no society.' And I can see our nation being

overrun and being wiped away by a brand new slick European race. It won't be long till our football teams are full of foreigners. It may only take a generation to end the Scottish nation, as we know it, but it will happen. The colour of the nation will change. Well, it serves them right: for they have neglected to look after their own."

The young artist had no close friends now - and he knew it. Sandy was off to work in Edinburgh, and David to America. He would now have to drift with his own fate for the first time. "Keep clear of lonesome dreams - don't let them haunt you," his mind mumbled, as he sat there at the bar.

He could see himself when old wandering into small galleries in the city centre, saying to people: "Do you like my painting?" and everyone being sweet and laughing, "Oh, that's lovely."

Then the scene seemed to change and, as his mind danced about, he wondered about himself for the umpteenth time: for Henry Bowers had nowhere to go. Everywhere he looked he felt the fashion of the new right wing enterprise nonsense suffocate him: "People born free have all suddenly become enterprising robots: fellowship, goodwill, the state and community will soon be outlawed. I can hardly believe it."

Henry looked at the lunchtime faces who were busy eating and drinking. After another drink he tried to rouse himself, "I will go to the flat, get something to eat, then start work on another painting."

As he approached the flat he noticed two figures standing outside the entrance of it, "I wonder who they are," he said to himself.

Just at that moment, David the DJ turned round and, when he saw the young artist approach, he shouted, "There he is!"

Then Sandy screamed, "Where have you been!"

Up at the flat, Henry poured them some drinks, then the three Art-lovers all sat in the living room and talked. David the DJ told his friends, "I catch the first flight to London in an hour, then it's across to America."

Sandy confirmed he had got the job in Edinburgh. He said in his deep impressive voice. "But I'll still pop through and see you as much as I can, Henry, dear."

Once again, the young artist felt the joy of life, moving on all sides of him, and for a time it seemed to make him forget about what lay in front of him. The young artist, however, sitting all alone in his apartment later that night felt very low indeed, "What's the point! There's no work. Nobody is interested in art. Is it really worth going on?"

At nine o'clock the young artist went to the bar City Limits to try and cheer himself up. He told himself, as he walked along, "There must be some new friends out there, new thoughts, new experiences to make me run ahead of time once again."

Henry looked around the bar, but he hardly knew a soul. The new enterprising people, and their new culture, seemed to be everywhere - but he did not know any of them. At closing time, Henry wandered down towards the River Clyde, and as he crossed the dark road he looked over at the Vintners Bar, and to cheer himself up he tried to imagine old Hoffman, the art dealer, inside the bar, cavorting with male prostitutes - but even that did not cheer him up.

The young artist stood at the stone wall and looked over the Jamaica Bridge. For a few moments, he looked down into the black Clyde, and stared at the water. The river moved slow, relentlessly as if in time with his own thoughts. He looked at some people way off down near the suspension bridge, a taxi went by, then a car.

Henry felt his spirits pouring out of him as if into the black river. He felt weak, empty. His troubled mind raced ahead of him, and his thoughts at times seemed to stop in the middle of nowhere. Then a malign spirit tried to tempt him: "Jump in, jump in, get it over with - it won't take long. You will soon be at the bottom, no one will miss you. Death is a release. Jump in, jump in..."

Henry looked up high above the city at the crazy Glasgow moon, cut in half, then suddenly as if to go down was to come up again, the young artist heard voices somewhere in the city. Young

men were teasing each other, something about a girl they knew who went out with them at weekends. Just then, the clouds high above the city moved away from the half moon and the light started to sparkle once more on the water below. The young artist pushed the stone wall away from him. With a happy heart he put his hand in his pocket and brought out a coin and threw it into the black Clyde.

Then the young artist walked back to his flat in Sauchiehall Street. And with every step the young artist took away from the death scene he felt better, and just to prove it to himself as he walked home he thought up another art axiom. That night before he went to bed Henry wrote the phrase down in his little notebook, that he kept by his bed, so that he would remember it in the morning:

ART IS NOTHING BUT SURVIVAL FOR THY SELF

Paintings from the novel:

<https://walkerjohna.wordpress.com/pre-war-docs/>

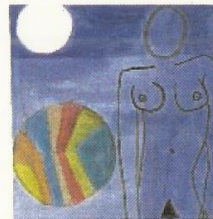
<http://www.cosmos-original-productions.co.uk/paintings.htm>

Fashion Squares

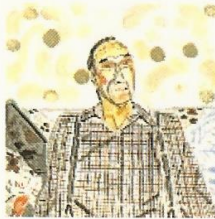


the blue bar jug

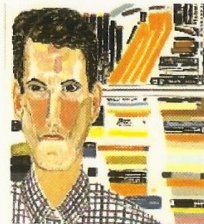
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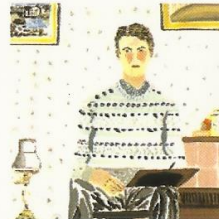
goodbye holiday



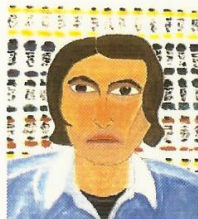
suffering man



the author



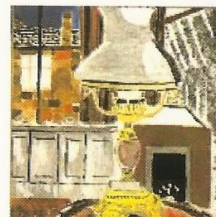
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artist in an art shop



*the man the mirror
and the lightbulb*



fireplace



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